

Hafa Adai!

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Inmate who settled suit, sues anew current, ex-DOC officials. **PAGE 6**

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Mass testing starts today

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and Governor's COVID-19 Task Force conducted a dry run for COVID-19 testing drive-thru service at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport yesterday.

KRIZEL TUAZON

By IVA MAURIN and JUSTINE NAUTA

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REPORTERS

ON THE NET

Register to get tested:
<http://chcc.gov.mp/covid19testing.php>

It is also important to note that the testing is for those who wish to be tested and is not mandatory. This means testing is available for anyone who

wants to be tested. A dry run was done at the airport yesterday.

The first batch of people to take part in the community testing are

See MASS on Page 4

Mass testing for COVID-19 starts today in the CNMI via drive-thru service at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. The testing is free and is open to anyone.

TESTING PROCESS

Preparing for your appointment

You must bring:

- The test number that was given from the CHCC rep.
- A valid identification card for each person who is getting tested (driver's license, mayor's ID, passport, or birth certificate)
- Only four people allowed in the car, each passenger must wear a face mask and have a working window if they're getting tested
- If any of the passengers don't have a test number and/or ID, will not be tested.

During your appointment

- Community testing will only be at the Saipan International Airport at the departure and arrival areas.

- During the appointment, your car will be marked "A" or "B," along with further instructions.
- You must show you ID at all times during the process.
- Passengers must remain in the vehicle at all times with a face mask.

After being tested

A CHCC representative will contact those who got tested about the test results. Test results will be confidential. For minors, CHCC staff can only share results with parents or legal guardians.

An individual who has already gotten tested and is negative for coronavirus is advised to continue to practice good hygiene, social distancing, and to stay home as much as possible. (CHCC)

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, April 27, 2020**

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	141	1	142
Recovered	128	0	128
Active	8	0	8
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	14	0	14
Recovered	11	0	11
Active	1	0	1
Deaths	2	0	2

*Total includes a sailor from the USS Theodore Roosevelt

**Guam has one new confirmed positive COVID-19 and all active cases are currently in isolation. Saipan has no new cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

Field hospital is unveiled



An inside look at one of the Medical Care and Treatment Facility tents set up at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. parking lot in Garapan to house COVID-19 patients.

IVA MAURIN

By IVA MAURIN

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REPORTER

The CNMI COVID-19 Task Force unveiled yesterday the temporary hospital that had been built at the

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. parking lot to house COVID-19 patients in the event of a spike in the number of cases in the CNMI.

The Lower Navy Hill installation,

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Trump's green-card halt: Is it just temporary?

By ELLIOT SPAGAT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Pamela Austin,

a recruiter at Adventist Health Bakersfield in California, made seven job offers to foreign nurses in Febru-

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INSIDE



BUSINESS

Saipan Go aims to help people fulfill daily routines without having to leave home.

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Home health care is becoming a new front in the national fight against COVID-19.

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ASIA

Contrary to its ultra-modern image, many Japanese lack the tools to work from home.

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Local

Manglona enters \$5.65M judgment in favor of contractor, vs IPI

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona has entered a judgment in the principal amount of \$5.65 million in favor of a former contractor of the Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC and against IPI for breach of contract.

In a written order last Thursday, Manglona finds there is no just reason for a delay in the entry of judgment on Pacific Rim Land Development LLC's claim for breach of contract on the promissory note.

The judge granted Pacific

Rim's attorneys' fees and costs associated with this claim, as well as prejudgment interest, saying that Pacific Rim is entitled to the amount. Pacific Rim was ordered to submit a proposal regarding interest calculation and attorneys' fees by April 16, 2020.

Manglona directed the clerk to enter judgment in favor of Pacific Rim the amount of \$5.65 million, plus attorneys' fees, costs and interest to be determined.

Manglona said Pacific Rim submitted evidence that the promissory note exists in the form of the note itself and a sworn declaration from

Pacific Rim's owner, Keith Stewart, attesting to facts regarding the negotiation and execution of the note.

The judge noted that the promissory note submitted by Pacific Rim is the same document that IPI filed with its opposition to the lien application. Manglona said that IPI admitted that it executed the promissory note.

As to the breach of the note and damages, Stewart attests that IPI failed to make payments under the note and only paid \$5,650,000 of the total \$11,300,000 due. Stewart said the promissory note required full payment by June 15,

2019. Pacific Rim also provided a spreadsheet of payments received from IPI on the note.

In response, Manglona said, IPI offered no evidence or affidavits to rebut any of Pacific Rim's evidence. "IPI has thus failed to meet its burden to establish a genuine issue of material fact," the judge said.

Pacific Rim, through Colin Thompson, is suing IPI and five unnamed alleged co-conspirators for breach of contract (construction and promissory note), and unjust enrichment, saying it has completed the agreed-upon work on Sept. 30, 2018. Thompson said the unpaid amount that is owed Pacific Rim is \$5.65

million but it wants to collect from IPI approximately \$10 million in damages. Pacific Rim also filed an application for a mechanic's lien on IPI's hotel-casino project and on the land that it sits on.

IPI recently filed counterclaims against Pacific Rim, alleging, through counsel Cong Nie, that Pacific Rim hired a kitchen helper and a delivery man and made them work in IPI's casino-resort project in Garapan as carpenters.

IPI brought counterclaims against Pacific Rim for promissory fraud, fraud in the inducement as to the promissory note, violation of Consumer Protec-

tion Act, and breach of contract.

IPI asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to issue an order for rescission of IPI's contract with Pacific Rim and the promissory note.

IPI requested the court to hold Pacific Rim liable to pay damages in an amount to be proven at trial. The company demanded a jury trial.

According to Nie in IPI's counterclaims, IPI did not discover Pacific Rim's fraudulent intent prior to April 16, 2018, and therefore, its promissory fraud claim is timely.

Nie said Pacific Rim knowingly made the misrepresentations as to the trade categories of its employees in its monthly invoices.

Judge grants IPI's request for TRO against a recycling center, owner

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley M. Bogdan has granted Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's motion for temporary restraining order that prohibits a recycling company and its owner and others from concealing or

destroying all copper wire and other construction materials belonging to IPI under their possession or control.

Bogdan's TRO, which was issued last April 16, is supposed to expire 10 days later. Covered in the TRO are FSM Recycling Corp., FSMRC owner Jae Yoon Cha, FSMRC employee Eric

Cruz, and a former IPI employee, Ricky Reyes.

Bogdan set a hearing for last Thursday, April 23, on whether a preliminary injunction should be issued to maintain the prohibition until the end of this lawsuit. It is not clear yet whether the TRO has been extended or not. As of press time yesterday, *Saipan Tri-*



Bogdan

bune was still trying to get information whether the hearing set for last Thursday indeed happened or was postponed.

FSMRC and its owner, Cha, and employee Cruz, through counsel Robert T. Torres, summoned IPI counsel Robert O'Connor to appear and testify at the hearing.

IPI, through counsel

O'Connor, is suing FSMRC, Cha, Cruz, Reyes, and 15 unnamed co-defendants for allegedly conspiring to steal and sell construction materials from IPI's warehouses. IPI is suing the defendants for conversion. IPI asked the court to hold defendants liable to pay punitive damages in excess of \$50,000 and other damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

FSMRC, Cha, and Cruz, through counsel Robert T. Torres, filed counterclaims against

IPI for invasion of privacy/false light, and abuse of process.

In addition, FSMRC, Cha, and Cruz are suing IPI for business disparagement. They also filed a crossclaim for defamation against Reyes and 15 unnamed persons.

Reyes allegedly prepared a handwritten statement early this year that he and another man would cut about 10 feet of copper wire from spools owned by IPI and sell the wire to Cha and FSMRC.

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Rehab provision in sentence on ex-cop in 'ice' case vacated

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The CNMI Supreme Court has found that the rehabilitation provision was unreasonably rendered by Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja in sentencing a former police officer in 2014 for illegal possession of methamphetamine.

In their order issued Friday, CNMI Supreme Court associate justices John A. Manglona and Perry B. Inos, and Justice Pro Tempore Robert J. Torres granted Victor Val Hocog's petition to vacate his rehabilitation term.

The justices remanded the case to the Superior Court for re-sentencing consistent with their order.

The justices, however, denied Hocog's petition to expand their review beyond the motion to reconsider.

"We do not find that we overlooked a point of law or fact in regard to the alleged illegality of Hocog's sentence," the justices said.

However, the justices said, in the interests of justice, they find that Hocog's sentence with respect to the rehabilitation provision was unreasonably rendered.

The justices said Naraja abused his discretion in issuing such a sentencing provision.

Hocog signed a plea deal with the CNMI government and entered a guilty plea.

On Sept. 25, 2014, Naraja

ja sentenced Hocog to 15 months in prison, a \$2,000 fine, and 30 months of drug rehabilitation services after release. Hocog was given credit for 226 days of time served.

Pursuant to the terms of the plea agreement, Naraja mandated Hocog to receive 30 months of rehabilitation treatment from the Hawaii Habilitat Treatment facility or a similar facility.

Naraja ordered that the \$10,000 that Hocog posted as bail be used for the cost of treatment.

The judge further ordered that if Hocog "failed these conditions, he will be in violation of criminal contempt, and may face a maximum punishment of up to six months imprisonment, a fine of \$100, or both."

In their order Friday, the justices said Hocog's likely inability to fund rehabilitation services outside the CNMI coupled with holding contempt over Hocog's head for an indeterminate period of time—and therefore the possibility of imprisonment—make this term simply unreasonable.

According to court records, eight months after Naraja issued the judgment of conviction, Hocog moved to correct an illegal sentence.

Naraja denied the motion. Hocog then filed a motion to reconsider which was also denied.

Hocog appealed to the Su-

preme Court the denial of his motion for reconsideration, arguing that "because rehabilitation is inherently a probationary term," Naraja erred by imposing an illegal sentence.

According to Hocog, a sentence must be suspended first before any condition of probation is imposed.

Hocog argued that because the sentence was not suspended before rehabilitation (a probationary term) was imposed, the rehabilitation provision is illegal.

The justices responded by announcing that "rehabilitation in this case is not a form of probation, but rather a valid bargained-for term and condition of Hocog's plea agreement.

The justices reiterated what Hocog's counsel explicitly stated in the plea agreement and at the plea hearing, that rehabilitation is not a probationary term.

As a result, the justices said, "the relevant legal question is whether the court may allow rehabilitation as a condition of a plea agreement."

The justices agreed that Naraja did.

Accordingly, the justices said, Naraja did not abuse his discretion and they affirmed the denial of Hocog's motion to reconsider.

Hocog then timely filed petitions for rehearing of the high court's decision.

Hocog, through counsel then-assistant public defend-

er Cindy Nesbit, argued that because an illegal sentence may be appealed at any time, the justices incorrectly narrowed their review to the motion for reconsideration.

Hocog argued that no statutory authority exists to impose rehabilitation and that as a probationary term, rehabilitation cannot be imposed without a suspended sentence.

Assistant public defender Robert Charles Lee argued in the government's opposition.

In rejecting Hocog's first argument, the justices said the motion to correct an illegal sentence was itself untimely.

The justices said a motion to reduce a sentence may be made...within 120 days after the sentence is imposed.

The justices said Hocog filed the motion to correct an illegal sentence well beyond 120 days later.

The justices said after the court denied the motion to correct, Hocog did not appeal, and instead moved for reconsideration.

The justices said Hocog appealed the court's denial of his motion for reconsideration, but this appeal was over two months after the court's denial of the motion to correct.

The justices said the high court's rule requires that a notice of appeal be filed within 30 days of the entry of the order being appealed.

They noted that Hocog did not file an appeal of the denial within the time prescribed by the high court's rules.

Hocog finally conceded that he only appealed the motion to reconsider and not the motion to correct.

The justices said these considerations taken together justified limiting their review to the motion to reconsider.

On rehabilitation issue, the justices said the argument that Naraja did not comply with statutory authority in crafting his sentence is erroneous.

The justices said Naraja did not exceed his mandate to fashion a sentence "in the best interests of justice" and did not conflict with other sentencing statutes.

The justices said they affirm their finding that rehabilitation, in this context, is not a probationary term.

The justices said because rehabilitation is not a probationary term, the remaining argument concerning suspended sentences has no merit.

The justices said Naraja

mandated that Hocog receive 30 months of rehabilitation treatment from the Hawaii Habilitat Treatment facility or a similar facility.

To fund this, the justices said, Naraja ordered that the \$10,000 which Hocog's mother posted as bail "be used for treatment at Habilitat or a substantially similar rehabilitation program."

The justices said Naraja did not make any findings concerning Hocog's eligibility for admission to a long-term addiction treatment center, the costs and duration of the long-term treatment program, or his ability to pay for the rehabilitation program.

The justices said Naraja simply ordered Hocog receive 30 months of rehabilitation treatment.

They said there is also no discussion of responsibility for payment of any costs in excess of \$10,000 and it is unrealistic to expect that \$10,000 would be enough to pay for Hocog to live in Hawaii and attend a residential treatment program for 30 months when the cost of living in Hawaii is one of the most expensive in the U.S.

"It is unlikely that Hocog could even carry this burden," the justices said.

Burglary, theft incidents in Papago, Paupau Beach

On Friday, April 24, 2020, at about 6:25am, the CNMI Department of Public Safety received a 911 call reporting a burglary and theft incident at a private residence located in the village of Papago. Police were dispatched to the scene.

At about 6:32am, police arrived at the residence and met with the caller. The caller led police to the back of the residence where police noticed a 5' x 10' window that looked to have been tampered.

Items reported missing from the residence include one Dewalt drill set, one jigsaw (no brand reported), one grinder, one drill with a cord, two battery chargers, and three computer tablets.

DPS would like to remind the public to be diligent when purchasing tools and/or electronic devices from unknown individuals,

or online.

Later that day at about 3:25pm, DPS received another 911 call reporting a theft incident that had occurred at Paupau Beach in the village of San Roque. Police were again dispatched to the scene.

At about 3:31pm, police arrived at the scene and met with the caller. The caller told police that about 2pm, they parked their vehicle by the first pavilion to eat lunch. While eating lunch, a white sedan pulled up right next to their vehicle for about a minute before leaving. The caller got back into their vehicle and drove around the island without getting out of their vehicle.


When they decided to make a stop for a drink they noticed their purse was not in the vehicle.

Items reported missing from the vehicle include


one brown purse with a brown carrying strap and a gold zipper, one small-sized black leather wallet, one brown and green owl coin purse, one set of keys, one black purse with a gloss black carry handle with a circular design on the front side, one Gucci long-sized wallet, and a few personal identification cards.

The white sedan is described as having the rear passenger door being a different color, possibly gray or brownish primer.

If you or someone you know has any information relating to the two crimes we encourage you to call 911 immediately, or if you wish to remain anonymous you may call the CNMI Crime Stoppers Hotline at 234-7272. Crimestoppers pays up to \$1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. (PR)



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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

April 28, 2020

Substantial Amendment to the Five Year Consolidated Plan (2015-2019) and Program Year 2019 Annual Action Plan

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) announces the availability for public review and comment, the Substantial Amendment to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2015 – 2019) / Annual Action Plan Program Year 2019.

NMHC's Citizen Participation Plan has triggered the need for a substantial amendment to both the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2015- 2019) and the Annual Action Plan for Program Year 2019. The CNMI is seeking the public's comments to amend both the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2015-2019) and the Annual Action Plan for the Program Year 2019 for the following: 1) To amend the NMHC's Citizen Participation Plan 2) To include additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Emergency Solutions Grant funds (HEARTH Act) (HESG) made possible through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act which will address the COVID19 pandemic in the CNMI 3) To amend HOME activities to respond to CoVid19.

The planned activities for each CPD program include the following:

Program	Allocation	Project Description
CDBG	\$549,270.00	Acquisition of a mobile clinic for the Commonwealth Health Care Corporation to extend clinical and prevention services to at-risk populations; Planning and Administrative Costs
HESG	\$275,414.00	Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services, Rapid Re-housing Assistance; Homelessness Prevention Assistance; Homeless Management Information System (HMIS); Planning and Administrative Costs
HOME	N/A	To amend current HOME activities to respond to CoVid19

The CNMI seeks to amend its Citizen Participation Plan to reflect actions needed to expedite the CNMI's response to CoVid19 and to allocate funds to activities which will serve the low-moderate income population during the pandemic and which meets the HUD National Objectives.

The drafted Substantial Amendment to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2015 – 2019)/Annual Action Plan Program Year 2019 will be made available for review on the NMHC website beginning Tuesday, April 28, 2020. In addition, due to protocols to mitigate the spread of CoVid19, NMHC will be hosting virtual hearings through the following online forums on Tuesday, May 5, 2020:

- 1) Social Media- FB Live
- 2) Zoom Video and Teleconferencing
- 3) NMHC Website

Details regarding the virtual hearings can be found at NMHC's website at www.nmhc.gov.net

The general public will be given the opportunity to provide comments at the virtual hearings. All written comments should be submitted through the NMHC website at www.nmhc.gov.net or at the Drop Box located at the NMHC Office Building in Garapan, Saipan, no later than 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 6, 2020. For further information, please contact Zenie Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director, at 670-285-2146.

/s/ Jesse. S. Palacios
Corporate Director

NMHC will make necessary arrangements for persons with disabilities. If you should require any special accommodations, please contact the Deputy Corporate Director 670-285-2146.

This advertisement is paid with HUD CPD Funds.

Over 10K meals distributed daily

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Public School System's Child Nutrition Program is distributing over 10,000 meals daily basis.

According to Dale Robert, PSS Child Nutrition Program director, the Grab & Go Meal Distribution program has raised the number of prepared meals to over 10,000 daily as of last week, and the program still plans to add more since sites continue to run out.

"We did well over 10,000 meals [last Wednesday], almost 10,500, and we have plans to deliver 11,275," Roberts said.

Since the meal distribution started on April 16, the number of distributed meals has shot up due to many government employees being furloughed, Roberts said.

"When we restarted again in April 16, we prepared 10,000 meals and we

delivered 9,100. Since folks in the government, across the board, have been furloughed, the numbers have really jumped. Sites where we hadn't run out before we actually ran out. We've increased the numbers each day since," Roberts said.

However, Roberts also reported that he has noticed some members of the community taking advantage of the program.

"The sites have been generally running smoothly but I travel site to site and I've seen lots of families that are cheating and going to multiple sites. I fear that there are abuses happening. I've got folks coming to the sites asking for nine, 10, 11 meals at a time. Some are able to produce documentation for their kids and some are not and, of course, we're not in the business of turning people away if we don't have a good reason and the only reason is if they don't have documentation," he said.

If the program continues to be abused, Roberts fears that the number of meals that will be prepared and distributed daily will have to be capped. "We are already serving more lunches each day than we have at these schools on regular school days and we can increase and we can keep increasing because we have kids in the community that are not students like 3-year-olds and other children that wouldn't normally show up on a school roster. We're going to keep feeding but we are going to approach a number at some point where it's going to go above the number of students that we can account for on a regular basis so I'm going to have to put a cap at some point," he said.

Fortunately, according to Roberts, the CNMI hasn't reached that point yet. "We're not there yet, and I hope we don't get to that point, I keep expecting that we'll level off but each

day we seem to be adding a little bit more. It's not a funding issue but it's a program issue and I just want to leave it at that."

When the meal distribution began

back in March, the CNP was preparing about 8,000 breakfast, lunch, and snacks and served just over 6,400 children daily until the program was temporarily put on hold.

NMTI special meeting tomorrow

The Northern Marianas Technical Institute will have its board of trustees special meeting tomorrow, April 29, 10am at the NMTI campus in

Lower Base. Issues to be discussed is a review of current NMTI personnel, planned furlough, and other personnel matters. (PR)

MASS

From Page 1

those who have registered through the COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. website.

"Having the ability to do the community-based testing is critical because you're looking at individuals that are asymptomatic, but not coming to the [hospital] for health care services," said CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña at yesterday's dry run.

Those who want to be tested have to first register online or via phone.

"It's open to anyone, it's free. ... Register, show up, and we'll get back to you with the results," Muña said.

Anyone who wants to be tested must have a photo ID, for CHCC to know and ensure that "this is you, and you want to be tested," Muña said. The ID does not have to be current, and can even be expired.

According to a CHCC statement, after submitting a request for testing, a representative from the CHCC Community Testing Call-Back team will contact you to verify your information, schedule a testing appointment, and provide a test number.

Testing process

According to Muña, the drive-thru testing will be limited to up to four individuals in a car.

"It's limited to four in the car. And the reason for that is because we're dealing with body fluids, so we want to make sure that for those in the right, front and back, we will test them. ... You don't want any middle seat, again because of their body fluid."

Two to four nurses will be administering the tests on both sides of the car. The test is nasal pharyngeal, meaning it is done through the nose, with the nurse obtaining a swab sample. Only one nostril is needed for the test.

"For kids 3 years old or younger, since it's uncomfortable, it's up to the parents," said a Commonwealth Health Center staff. "If the kid is showing COVID-19 symptoms, then they should get tested."

As for results, Muña said that its release will depend on how many specimens CHCC can get.

"The ... way [the system is set right now] is it can do about 96 [specimens]. We do a run about four times, which results to about less than 400 a day. The viability of specimens can last a few days," she said.

When the community-based testing starts today, the results will be given as quickly as CHCC can, which can be in two days initially, and then be as quick as within four hours, once

CHCC acquires additional support.

"Right now, we can say probably two days, tomorrow, even in four hours, because that's how long it takes for the result," Muña added. "The governor's task force has gotten more equipment. So it's about personnel, equipment to do the testing." The U.S. Department of Defense is also supporting CHCC by sending a medical team that will help carry out the testing.

Lizzie, not her real name, thinks the idea of the drive-thru is a great idea since it seems easier and safer rather than waiting at the hospital to get tested. "I honestly thought that Saipan would be behind with all the precautionary measures, but the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and everyone included looks like they've been doing a fantastic job."

What's next?

Those who will test positive will be quarantined and will undergo treatment, while those who test negative will be asked to continue following the set COVID-19 directives.

"If you do come back negative, we want to make sure that we stress the continuation of social distancing and practicing what you've been doing, because it obviously was effective," she added.

Aside from setting up the drive-thru testing, CHCC will also be going to Rota and Tinian. "We'll be setting them up so that we can make sure that they have the viral transport media. We also need to make sure that they collect the [specimen], put it at the right temperature and send it over to us so that we can do the testing," she said.

CHCC has tested its hospital workers and all results came back negative. In addition, the CNMI is expecting additional test kits and equipment in the next few weeks.

Register to get tested at <http://chcc.gov.mp/covid19testing.php>.

Those who wish to get tested but have no access to the internet can call the CHCC COVID-19 Infoline at (670) 285-1352/1542/1672/1854 between 7:30am and 8am. You must provide a valid phone number to schedule an appointment and to receive your test results.

COVID-19 in Guam

As of April 27, the U.S. Naval Hospital Guam has reported an additional COVID-19 positive case. Guam now has 142 positive cases, with eight active, five deaths, and 128 recovered.

Additionally, Guam's Department of Public Health and Social Services, in collaboration with the Guam's government and federal and private partners, have expanded its COVID-19 testing via drive-thru and walk-in. Their testing is also free and residents must bring an official ID card.

TRUMP

From Page 1

ary and just finished a first round of interviews with 12 more candidates. They are from all over the world, including the United Kingdom, Philippines, Australia and Malaysia.

The international candidates fill the private hospital's critical need for experienced nurses who can work in emergency rooms and intensive care units, Austin said—jobs that can't be met only with U.S. nurses, many of whom are recent graduates.

That need could go unfilled, however, if President Donald Trump extends a 60-day hold on green cards he ordered in the name of protecting American jobs amid the coronavirus outbreak.

"It would be a huge setback," Austin said. "Those are holes I don't have people to fill."

Trump says the measure is necessary at a time when unemployment has climbed to levels last seen during the Great Depression.

Critics have dismissed the move as the president's veiled attempt to

achieve cuts to legal immigration that he previously suggested but couldn't persuade Congress or the courts to accept—and to distract voters from his handling of the pandemic.

But immigrant advocates and political opponents are not the only ones who oppose the measure: Hardliners from Trump's base say it doesn't go far enough to limit immigration.

The order "is designed to satisfy powerful business interests that value a steady flow of cheap foreign labor," Dan Stein, president of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, wrote in a letter to the president Thursday.

The Center for Immigration Studies, another hardline group, said the 60-day pause "will provide little relief to Americans" and criticized an exemption for foreigners who agree to invest at least \$900,000 in the U.S.

The proclamation, signed Wednesday, excludes temporary nonimmigrant visas for hundreds of thousands of workers a year, including farm workers, software engineers and others in fields deemed to have labor shortages. It doesn't apply to

green-card applicants already in the United States.

Many families will be barred from immigrating as long as the freeze lasts—more than 200,000 people at last year's levels. Spouses of U.S. citizens and their children under 21 are exempt, but parents, adult children, grandchildren, adult siblings and other relatives aren't.

Carl Shusterman, a Los Angeles immigration attorney who advises hospitals, said he had hoped Trump's proclamation would provide a blanket exemption for nurses, who often arrive on green cards. Instead, it only exempts health care workers whose work is deemed essential to recovering from the COVID-19 outbreak.

"Embassies and consulates make the decisions," he said. "They don't have any special expertise in COVID-19, like none of us do."

Houston immigration attorney Raed Gonzalez said he doesn't expect the suspension to have much of an effect—at least in the short term—because embassies and consulates had already halted routine visa processing last month in response to the pandemic.

FIELD

From Page 1

called the Medical Care and Treatment Facility, houses 40 beds, and will be used as a venue to provide care and treatment for COVID-19 patients.

CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña said that it is meant to augment the hospital's 76-bed capacity, in preparation should there be an influx of positive coronavirus cases, to ensure that there is a separation of COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients in the CNMI.

"This facility will help out in making sure that our population is taken care of. CHCC has been the safety net for a lot of people for health care treatment, and we want to be able to make sure that there is that service that continues," Muña added.

CHCC has been at the forefront of providing health care and medical

treatment on the island, and this must be ensured, especially in the midst of the pandemic, she added.

"These last few days, it's not COVID-19 patients that's been dying. It's the people that have been dying of chronic diseases, that we need to take care of as well. So we want to make sure that we bring back these services and really at full strength," Muña said.

She added that health care is about being always prepared, in making sure that the Commonwealth Health Center has the capability to take care of the CNMI community. "We wouldn't have done it without everybody's cooperation. ... This is a cooperation to ensure that our population is taken cared of."

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres expressed appreciation to all of CNMI's federal partners such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Depart-

ment of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Defense for their help.

He also thanked all of the Commonwealth's first responders, medical professionals, nurses and doctors, the Public School System, and the Northern Marianas College, for helping make the facility possible.

"We've worked so hard in bringing this facility up and running," Torres said. "Do we want to use it? Absolutely not. But we wanted to make sure that in case we need it, that it's here, readily available."

The governor also reminded the community to continue to practice social distancing and proper hygiene. "Stay home as much as you can.

We can never and should not put our guards down now. We have some positive results in terms of the reduction of cases, but we're not out of the woods yet. We need to continue working together."

CUC to award sole-source contract for water filters

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is expecting to award a sole-source procurement contract to install 10 granulated activated carbon system units to filter CUC's drinking water and remove chemicals that cause contamination.

CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho in his status report disclosed that the sole-source order for the granulated acti-

vated carbon systems (GAC) were agreed upon following the conclusion of court proceedings last January before U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge David O. Carter.

Camacho submitted the status report to CUC counsel assistant attorney general Jose Mafnas Jr. last Wednesday. Mafnas, in turn, submitted the report to the District Court last Friday.

As of this date, Camacho said, CUC has had to shift its

financial plans from CUC cash reserves, which they no longer have available due to impacts from COVID-19 and decimation of the tourism industry to the CNMI, to a request for support from federal funds.

He said this resulted in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency agreeing and approving the use of funds from CUC's most recently approved grant pool for 2019.

Camacho said the original estimate for the 10 GAC in-

dividual units was \$459,000 which when the water sample was sent for pilot testing.

He said the price, however, increased to \$778,000 for the procurement of 10 duplex units, the assistance of a technician for installation and training, and for the cost of site construction and installation.

Camacho said the order for the GAC units is pending as of last Monday, April 20.

He said the procurement document is currently routing for budget certification by CUC's chief financial officer.

The executive director said they expect to award the project to a company through a sole-source procurement.

He said the expected delivery date of the units to CUC is about 20 to 24 weeks after issuance of the notice to proceed.

"Installation of the units would take about three to four weeks. The expected delivery date is mid to late September with installation occurring by the end of October," Camacho said.

Last month, Carter ordered an additional testing of water samples from CUC's As Terlaje tank to monitor concentration levels of chemicals that may contaminate CUC's drinking water and pose a

threat to public health.

Carter ordered one more test to be conducted in mid-to-late June so he will receive such test on or before July 8, 2020.

Mafnas informed Carter that the final results from testing of water samples drawn from As Terlaje tank last Feb. 4 showed that perfluorooctane sulfonates (PFOS) was at 25 parts per trillion and that perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) was a non-defect.

EPA's health advisory level is 70 parts per trillion in a water system.

Last Jan. 8, CUC issued a health advisory that it had detected in some areas on Saipan levels of contaminants—PFOS and PFOA—that exceeded EPA's health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion in a water system.

AS HOPE RECOVERY CENTER SHUTS DOWN

Probationer returns home and allegedly uses 'ice,' drinks beer

With the shutting down of Hinemlu O'hala Para Enteramenti Recovery Center, or the HOPE Recovery Center, due to COVID-19 pandemic, a federal probationer who was among the occupants of the facility went back to his residence and allegedly used methamphetamine and consumed an alcoholic beverage.

U.S. probation officer Gregory F. Arriola informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Friday that Francisco Nakatsukasa Basa violated conditions of his probation.

Arriola said that last March 29, he received a call from HOPE Recovery Center drug counselor Doreen Kintol that due to the current coronavirus pandemic, their facility was

temporarily shutting down until further notice.

Arriola said this meant that the occupants of HOPE Recovery Center, which included Basa, would be discharged from the facility.

Arriola said later that evening he received a call from Basa who shared the information given by Kintol and related that he was moving back to his home in Afetnas the following day.

He said Basa also admitted that prior to their phone conversation, he was subjected to a random drug test and tested positive for methamphetamine.

Arriola said he instructed Basa, among other things, to cease any further drug use.

Arriola said the following

morning, Kintol contacted him about Basa's positive drug test.

The probation officer said that last March 31, he received a call from Basa's wife, who advised that Basa was consuming an alcoholic beverage.

Arriola said when he spoke and confronted Basa about the information, Basa admitted he had consumed five cans of beer to help him relax after a long day of doing outside house chores.

Arriola said on the compliance matter, Basa continues to check in with him daily as instructed.

He said he is also working on referring Basa to another treatment vendor for substance abuse treatment since services with HOPE Recovery Center have temporarily ceased.

Conference on Island Sustainability to launch virtually on May 1

The 2020 University of Guam Conference on Island Sustainability will take place as a virtual conference series at 9am ChST on May 1 and at the same time every Friday for the next several weeks. The virtual conference is accepting registrations at no charge at www.uog.edu/cis2020.

Under the theme "Island Wisdom for a Global Future," the 11th annual conference will feature sustainability-focused talks by local and international experts.

"Sustainability is more important than ever," said Governor of Guam Lou Leon Guerrero and UOG President Thomas W. Krise, co-chairs of the conference. "This global COVID-19 disruption is a possible forecast of what is to come with the impacts of climate change and future public health concerns."

The coronavirus pandemic will be the focus of the first session on May 1, which will open with presentations from the Guam governor and Krise and then feature a panel of environmental and societal leaders from Hawaii, New Zealand, Grenada, and Guam, which will be represented by Lt. Gov. Joshua Tenorio. The panel will discuss and share solutions, solidarity, and connections in facing COVID-19 as island communities. The panelists are

all part of the Local2030 Island Network, a group of islands that came together during the UN General Assembly in 2019 with a commitment to locally implement the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

able Development Goals.

To register and find more information on the UOG Virtual Conference Series on Island Sustainability, visit www.uog.edu/cis2020. (PR)



PUBLIC AUCTION NOTICE USED OUTBOARD MOTORS

CPA-PAN-001-20

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) will sell at Public Auction, May 05, 2020 at 10:00 A.M. 2 units' outboard motors located at the CPA Building, Port of Saipan.

Brand: Mercury
Horse Power: 90

A minimum bid is set at \$1,000.00. The motors are sold "As Is" and "Where Is" and without Warranty. The successful bidder is required to pay 20% down payment at CPA Seaport Office on acceptance of bid. Balance shall be payable at the CPA Accounting Office, Saipan International Airport within 5 calendar days from auction closing date. The outboard motors will be released to the buyer upon full payment of the bid amount. Failure to pay in full will result in the forfeiture of the down payment. Payment shall be in cash, cashier's check, or money order payable to CPA.

CPA assumes no responsibility for any costs incurred by bidder's in their preparation of the bids.

Inquiries and inspection may be directed to the Procurement Officer, Mr. Alex C. Tudela, at telephone number 237-6563 or 483-6501.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP20-CHCC/FACILITIES-002

NEW SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 29, 2020 TIME: 10:00 AM

"SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF A 25-TON AIR-CONDITIONING IN THE OXYGEN GENERATING ROOM"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)/INVITATION TO BID (ITB) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE (WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP). ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO RFP'S TAB ON THE BOTTOM NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP/ITB. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

***MANDATORY ASSESSMENT ON APRIL 8, 2020**
@ 9:00 A.M. SAIPAN TIME @ THE CHCC FACILITY/MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORAZON P. ADA
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK • Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Telephone: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131



PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that the Board will hold a Regular Board meeting on Friday, May 1, 2020 at 10:30 a.m. The meeting will be held via telephone conference at the CUC Conference Room, Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building to consider the following agenda. Public attendance is welcome.

AGENDA*

- I. Preliminary Matters
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Roll Call
 - C. Adoption of Agenda
 - D. Adoption of Minutes
 1. January 16, 2020 Regular Board Meeting
 2. January 23, 2020 Regular Board Meeting
 3. March 25, 2020 Special Board Meeting
- II. Old Business
 - A. Proposed FY 2021 Operations and Personnel Budget
 - B. Impact of COVID-19 on CUC Operations
 1. Ongoing Cost Cutting Measures
 2. Preparedness
 3. Reduction-in Force/Austerity
 - C. Procurement Matters (Contracts and RFPs)
 - D. Stipulated Orders 1 and 2
- III. New Business
- IV. Public Comments*
- V. Executive Session**
(Consultation with Legal Counsel on Personnel Matters, Contracts, and Board Communications)
- VI. Adjournment

* Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Agenda maybe modified during the meeting.

** Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board of Directors may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

Inmate who settled suit, sues anew current, ex-DOC officials

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

One of the 14 inmates who settled their lawsuit against

Department of Corrections officials in 2018, is suing former and current DOC officials again in federal court for alleged broken promises and

subjecting him to unlawful treatment.

Price Shoiter, through counsel Michael W. Dotts, is suing former DOC commissioner

Vincent S. Attao, DOC Commissioner Wally Villagomez, and DOC officials Gregory Castro and Georgia Cabrera, in their personal capacities.

Shoiter is suing Attao, Villagomez, Castro, and Cabrera for violation of Civil Rights under the 8th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the CNMI Constitution, violation of the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code, gross negligence, and emotional distress.

Shoiter asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to hold the defendants liable to pay him damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

The inmate requested the court to issue a judgment declaring that Attao, Castro, Cabrera, and Villagomez's policies, practices, acts are unlawful and violate his rights under the Constitution and laws of the U.S. and the CNMI.

He moved the court to enjoin Attao, Castro, Cabrera, Villagomez, and their subordinates from subjecting him to the unlawful and unconstitutional treatment.

Shoiter asked the court to maintain ongoing supervisory jurisdiction of this matter in order to monitor and enforce Attao, Castro, Cabrera, and Villagomez full and continuing compliance with the injunctive relief ordered.

He also demanded an award of attorney's fees and litigation costs.

According to Dotts in the complaint, a written grievance addressed to Villagomez on Oct. 1, 2019 stated that Shoiter was bringing his serious medical needs to the attention of Villagomez for the wanton and unnecessary infliction of pain that is the touchstone of the 8th Amendment.

Dotts said Shoiter sought immediate action from Villagomez for his serious medical needs.

Dotts said as of today, Villagomez, Attao, Castro, and Cabrera have not fully answered Shoiter's request for adequate medical care despite the settlement agreement entered into on Aug. 15, 2018, the numerous written grievances, and letter by attorney Jeanne Rayphand of the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc.

Dotts said Attao broke nearly all the promises given to Shoiter in the settlement agreement.

On medical care, the lawyer said Shoiter has yet to receive the second treatment shot to his left knee as recommended by a doctor at the Commonwealth Health Center.

As a result, Shoiter allegedly continues to experience pain and suffering to his knees and has to walk with a crutch.

Dotts said despite recommendation from two doctors that plaintiff should be referred to a cardiologist, he has

yet to receive an appointment to see one.

On dental care, Dotts said Shoiter is still waiting for his dentures to be replaced and he is experiencing difficulty eating.

Regarding eyecare, the lawyer said an eye doctor recommended surgery on Shoiter's right eye, but he has yet to receive surgery and has blurry vision.

Pertaining to medication, Shoiter was allegedly given twice expired medicines.

On staffing matters, Dotts said DOC did not hire an on-call nurse, psychologist, or psychiatrist.

In 2014, Shoiter was convicted and served prison term for sexually abusing a minor girl. In September 2016, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo slapped Shoiter with a 10-year prison term for pleading guilty in connection with the charges that he sexually abused again another minor girl in Dandan.

In August 2018, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona dismissed with prejudice a lawsuit filed by Shoiter and 13 other inmates against then-DOC commissioner Attao and DOC director Castro.

Dismissal with prejudice means the 14 inmates can no longer re-file the case.

Manglona ordered the dismissal because the parties have reached a settlement and requested the court to drop the case.

Manglona said she dismissed the case provided however, that the court will retain jurisdiction for the purpose of enforcing the terms of the settlement.

The judge instructed the clerk to close the case.

Attao and Castro settled the lawsuit.

The inmates sued Attao and Castro for cruel and unusual punishment for allegedly providing them inadequate medical care and inadequate mental health treatment, and subjecting them to solitary confinement.

By entering the settlement deal, Attao and Castro are not making any admission of liability. They have disputed the merits and validity of the inmates' claims.

Attao and Castro, in their official capacities, and the 14 inmates signed the settlement agreement.

NMPASI legal counsel Rayphand represented the inmates in that lawsuit.

The settlement is trying to resolve the issues of medical care, mental health care, dental care, eye care, medications, sanctions matter, records, and DOC rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

Online PMBA program at UOG ranks top 10 most affordable



UOG

Graduates from UOG's Professional Master of Business Administration program at commencement in December. From left, Ione Skye Llagas, Nicole Mesa, Erica Pangelinan, and Aubreeana Taylor.

The online Professional Master of Business Administration program at the University of Guam is one of the top 10 most affordable in the nation, according to an objective consumer report by GetEducated.com. The report ranked 371 regionally accredited online MBA programs based on the cost of full-time tuition and fees to complete the program.

"That's always been the

» Applications for next semester due April 30

goal of our online PMBA program — to be accessible by being online, but also to be accessible by being affordable, and we're thrilled to be ranked so highly against schools across the nation," said Annette T. Santos, dean of the School of Business & Public Administration.

The one-year PMBA program costs \$10,169 for residents and \$22,214 for non-residents, both of which beat the national in-state average for online MBA programs of \$28,000.

"UOG's online PMBA program was designed for Guam residents with full-time jobs, with families and children, and for people throughout Micronesia with limited opportunities



UOG

From left, Annette T. Santos, dean of the School of Business & Public Administration at the University of Guam, and assistant professor John J. Rivera, former chair of the PMBA program.

for affordable education to be able to advance their career trajectory," said former Program Chair John J. Rivera.

The UOG PMBA program first went online in 2015 and is one of two online degree programs that the university offers, along with an online Master of Education in Reading program.

The PMBA program spans two semesters starting in August each year and accepts a maximum of 15 students per cohort. Program applicants must have two years of full-time management or professional-level work experience and a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Applications are due by

April 30 each year. Those interested can email Program Chair Leila Kabigting at kabigtingl@triton.uog.edu.

GetEducated.com is a consumer group that publishes objective, data-driven rankings and reviews of the best online colleges and universities based on affordability, reputation, and employer acceptance. (PR)

Coast Guard, partners wrap up successful Op Rai Balang 2020

HONOLULU—The United States and international partners successfully concluded the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) surveillance operation in the Pacific, March 27.

Op Rai Balang is an FFA operation designed to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing (IUU) in the Pacific. This year, eight Pacific island countries, the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and France participated, including a Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point HC-130 Hercules aircrew and the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter *Sequoia* (WLB 215).

“Despite the unprecedented situation the world finds itself in, we still have a duty to ensure essential missions such as the prevention of illegal fishing,” said Cmdr. Jason Brand, the enforcement branch chief for the Coast Guard 14th District. “Safety is always a top priority for all involved, and we closely coordinated with our partner counties and agencies to ensure the operation was both effective and didn’t present a danger to the wellbeing of the Pacific community.”

While operations to detect and disrupt IUU fishing occur year-round, the FFA holds four primary joint operations annually to combat IUU in the Pacific. Op Rai Balang is one of them. During the two-week effort, the FFA coordinated air and surveillance assets over 5 million square miles resulting in 108 sightings and conducting 24 boardings both at sea and in port.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many original plans for the participating countries

and agencies changed to meet new challenges. It was through adaptability and ingenuity of the participating nations were able to overcome these new hurdles and ensure the operation was a success.

The crew of the *Sequoia* adapted to the changing situation and patrolled the high seas off Guam and the Federated States of Micronesia. Their team included a linguist from the U.S. Marine Corps 3rd Radio Battalion. While on the high seas, the crew enforced international fisheries law under the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), another international, treaty-based organization dedicated to the conservation and management of migratory fish stocks on the high seas. The data gained from the crew’s efforts was, in turn, shared with the FFA, helping to create a better understanding of the fishing situation in the Pacific and advancing Op Rai Balang’s goals.

“The crew’s enthusiasm to conduct the mission and show the U.S. presence while interacting with fishing vessels on the high seas is a credit to their commitment. We are enforcing international law and ensuring we do our part to protect these vital resources,” said Lt. Cmdr. Ryan Adams, commanding officer, *Sequoia*. “While this isn’t necessarily our primary mission, as the *Sequoia* is a buoy tender, we take pride in our ability to carry out multiple different missions and the crew trains hard to serve the interest of the United States and our in-



PHOTOS BY
U.S. COAST GUARD/USCGC SEQUOIA

A boarding team from the USCGC *Sequoia* approaches a Taiwanese fishing vessel in the Pacific Ocean on March 13, 2020.

ternational partners in several different roles, whether maintaining aids to navigation or enforcing fisheries laws.”

The *Sequoia* and HC-130 Hercules crews operated alongside partner crews from a Navy P-8 Poseidon, Australia’s HMAS Maryborough, a New Zealand Defense Force P-3 Orion, and the French navy ship D’entrecaesteux during the operation. The close working relationships between these Pacific Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group allies allowed for effective



A boarding team from the USCGC *Sequoia* approaches a Taiwanese fishing vessel in the Pacific Ocean on March 13, 2020.

tive coverage of the significant operational zone.

Fish stocks are a vital renewable resource for many nations in the Pacific, and because of the migratory nature of fish, these countries need to work together in conservation. The multi-million-dollar IUU fishing industry represents a direct threat to the efforts to ensure these resources remain sustainable for years to come.

“Fisheries surveillance in the Pacific is imperative to ensure compliance by the fishing fleets, and deter any illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities,” said Cmdr. Robert Lewis, at the FFA’s Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre (RFSC) in Honiara. “Fisheries have a direct benefit for Pacific island countries economies, and that makes surveillance even

more important in these unprecedented times.”

The FFA is an international organization whose purpose is to assist its 17 member countries in sustainably managing fishery resources within their Exclusive Economic Zone from IUU. The organization supplies member countries with expertise and technical assistance for protecting their fisheries. (USCG)



A patrol boat crew from the Federated States of Micronesia operates in the Pacific in late 2019. Similar crews participated in Operation Rai Balang in early 2020.

Navy to conduct training in Dandan-Malojloj, Radio Barrigada

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. Navy will conduct training in Dandan-Malojloj and Radio Barrigada April 27 to May 2 from 10:45am to 11:55pm.

Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if

» **Agat Bay, Outer Apra Harbor also scheduled**

they see or hear increased activity due to the training.

The U.S. Navy will conduct live fire exercises in open ocean April 27 to May 2 from 10:45am to 11:55pm at the following coordinates: 13°26’N/145°08’E, 13°42’N/144°36’E.

Marine vessels are advised to remain clear of the area by five nautical miles for the duration of the event and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast Notice to Mariners for advisories.

The U.S. Navy will also conduct training in the vicinity of Agat Bay and Outer Apra Harbor April 27 to May 2 from 10:45am to 11:55pm.

The general public is advised to be aware of the train-

ing and requested to remain clear of units in the area for the duration of this event.

These trainings support readiness and are critical to developing the skills needed to respond to operational missions throughout the region to ensure a stable, free, and open Indo-Pacific. (PR)

Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Despite Trump's chloroquine hype, we're still waiting for a 'game changer' cure for COVID-19

It's been about four weeks since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration gave an emergency blessing to the use of two anti-malaria drugs for the treatment of COVID-19, setting the stage for the stockpiling and distribution of millions of doses. But so far, the drugs have fallen far short of President Donald Trump's repeated promotion of them as potential "game changers."

For the most part, studies and clinical experience haven't shown the hoped-for results of lowered death rates or quicker clearing of the novel coronavirus with chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine. The drugs' side effects — most notably, dangerous heart problems — were troubling enough that a research effort in Brazil changed its protocol to avoid giving high doses, and Sweden has warned hospitals against using it to treat COVID-19. A newly released analysis of its use in veterans hospitals found no benefit. In fact, patients treated with hydroxychloroquine plus the usual therapies were more likely to die than those who received only the latter.

That's not to say the drugs, whose anti-inflammatory capabilities make them useful in treating autoimmune diseases, are necessarily hapless against COVID-19. The more rigorous studies we need haven't been completed, and it's unknown whether treatment might be more effective at certain stages of the disease than at others at least one study indicated that taking the drugs in early, milder stages might be helpful. In a pandemic with no vaccine or known treatment, it could be that trying something is better than trying nothing—as long as there is solid reason to think that the benefits will outweigh the risks.

But the rush to prejudice one drug or another as a possible magic bullet can be dangerous to our health. And now a vaccine expert has been ousted from his job as the head of a federal agency tasked with speeding the development of drugs and other medical responses to pandemics, apparently because he said that very thing. Dr. Rick Bright had thwarted Trump by refusing to push for widespread use of the anti-malarial drugs and calling for a scientifically sound approach to tackling the virus.

"Contrary to misguided directives, I limited the broad use of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine, promoted by the administration as a panacea, but which clearly lack scientific merit," Bright said.

Something similar happened with a rapid test for the novel coronavirus put out by Abbott Laboratories. The president hyped the tests, unboxing one before cameras and pronouncing it "an incredible system." But the tests were plagued by supply-chain issues for needed components and then were found to be giving false negative results in certain situations, which could mean that infected people were out and about when they should have been quarantined.

The problem isn't with trying an off-label use of a drug for a disease whose death toll mounts every day, or with helping companies speed the process of developing badly needed

See **DESPITE** on Next Page

Coronavirus reminds Asian Americans like me that our belonging is conditional

I called my parents a few nights ago to tell them to be cautious when stepping out of the house, because they might be targets of verbal or even physical abuse. It felt so strange. Our roles had flipped.

My plea mirrored the admonitions I received from them as a child growing up in Houston. The world, they cautioned, was hostile and it viewed us as strangers. So they warned me to stick close to my family. Close to my kind.

The fact that the coronavirus seems to have originated in China has spawned a slew of anti-Asian hate crimes. Across the country, Asian American parents and children are making versions of the call I made. Friends are sharing firsthand accounts of abuse on text chains and circulating articles on Facebook, always ending with the suddenly ominous "stay safe."

Growing up, the assumption was that once we became American enough, there would be no need for such warnings — that we would be safe. To that end, my parents encouraged me and my younger brother to watch as much television as possible, so that we might learn to speak and act like the natives. The hope was that race would not disadvantage us — the next generation — if we played our cards right.

When I became an actor (maybe as a result of all that TV), and really started to work, I felt glimmers of my parents' hope coming to fruition — doors were open, strangers were kinder. In some ways, I began to lead a life devoid of race. But I've learned that a moment always comes along to remind you that your race defines you above all else.

It might be a small moment, like a salesperson greeting you with "konnichiwa." Or it might be a string of moments, like the press tour that Kal Penn and I took to promote "Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle" in 2004, a few years after 9/11.

We flew across the country—New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Seattle—and it became a grim routine: Flight after flight, Kal would be pulled aside for a "random" search. On one leg of the tour, Kal's friend Gabe joined us, and when we hit security, Kal was selected for a search while Gabe and I flew through unscathed. We gathered our bags and waited on a bench for Kal to be released. Rummaging through his backpack, Gabe suddenly said, "Kal's going to be annoyed." When I looked inside it, I realized why: Gabe, who is white, had gone camping recently, and had neglected to remove his Rambo-sized hunting knife from his backpack.

I gasped and looked back at Kal, who was watching a Transportation Security Administration worker empty the contents of his bag. It was a reality check.

Asian Americans are experiencing such a moment right now. The pandemic is reminding us that our belonging is conditional. One moment we are Americans, the next we are all foreigners,

By **JOHN CHO**
Los Angeles Times

John Cho is an actor best known for his roles in the "Harold & Kumar" and "Star Trek" films. He lives in Los Angeles.



who "brought" the virus here.

Like fame, the "model minority" myth can provide the illusion of "raceless-ness." Putting select Asians on a pedestal silences those who question systemic injustice. Our supposed success is used as proof that the system works — and if it doesn't work for you, it must be your fault.

Never mind that 12% of us are living below the poverty line. The model minority myth helps maintain a status quo that works against people of all colors.

But perhaps the most insidious effect of this myth is that it silences us. It seduces Asian Americans and recruits us to act on its behalf. It converts our parents, who in turn, encourage us to accept it. It makes you feel protected, that you're passing as one of the good ones.

And because the stereotypes may be complimentary (hard-working, good at math), it makes people — including us — think that anti-Asian sentiment is somehow less serious, that it's racism lite. That allows us to dismiss the current wave of Asian hate crimes as trivial, isolated and unimportant. Consider the comedians who mock Asians, but restrain themselves when it comes to other groups.

Of course, with the falsely positive come the negative stereotypes (you're sneaky, you're stealing jobs, you're corrupt). After I had been busted for cheating on a Latin quiz in high school, I recall my teacher asking, "Why are Koreans such cheaters?"

During times of national stress, it's these darker stereotypes that prevail. My wife's families were incarcerated in camps during World War II, even while her great-uncles were serving in an all-Japanese American battalion of the U.S. Army. Vincent Chin, a Chinese American autoworker, was brutally beaten to death in Detroit in 1982, blamed for the Japanese "takeover" of the auto industry. And just recently, an Asian woman in Brooklyn had acid thrown at her while she was taking out the trash, another among the skyrocketing attacks against Asians.

See **CORONAVIRUS** on Next Page

Trump's 'secret stash' of voters

Writing in The Washington Post recently, columnist and veteran political analyst Henry Olsen suggested that we may all be missing something important: President Donald Trump's showing in head-to-head ballot tests against expected Democratic nominee Joe Biden is lagging his job approval numbers in recent RealClearPolitics polling averages.

After noting the strong relationship between presidential job approval and election outcomes, Olsen wrote: "Biden leads Trump by nearly six points, 48.3 to 42.4 percent, in the most recent RCP average. Trump's approval rating in the RCP average was 46.0 percent on Wednesday morning. If Trump's true vote share approximates that, he only trails Biden by about 2 points. If that happens on Election Day, Trump could once again win the Electoral College while losing the popular vote."

That's the secret stash of voters that could help the president win a second term, apparently — voters who now say (in the middle of a health care crisis) they approve of the president's job performance but don't also say they will vote for him in the fall.

All we have to do is manipulate the ballot test by inserting Trump's job approval number where his percentage of the vote is.

I immediately looked at four random dates from this month and found Olsen was correct. On April 1, 6, 13 and 20, Trump's job approval was between 45.2% and 47.4%, while his share of the ballot test ranged from 41.7% to 44.3%. On the four dates I checked, Trump's job approval was higher than his ballot average by 3.1 points, 2.5 points, 3.5 points and 3.3 points.

If job approval is a strong predictor of the presidential elec-

tion, then maybe Olsen is right.

But when I looked back into the recent past, the data showed something different — something that undercuts Olsen's hypothesis.

I looked back at Trump's job approval and ballot test aggregations on four random days in October (Oct. 4, 9, 16 and 27), November (Nov. 1, 10, 20, 28) and January/February (Jan. 5, 13, 23 and Feb. 3) and found nothing like the April results.

The Trump job approval and ballot test numbers were remarkably similar. Sometimes one was a fraction of a point higher, and sometimes the other was a point or a half a point higher. This trend held for all three months, making it completely different from the April data.

This brings us to an obvious question: Given that we are in the middle of a national health care crisis, wouldn't it make sense not to draw sweeping conclusions about 2020 until things settle down?

Handicappers of old may not use all the snazzy models of today, but we always had one rule of thumb on which many of us relied: For incumbents, what you see is what you get.

I've watched thousands of races, and in all but a few, an incumbent trailing in a race can't count on getting most of the undecided voters. If, after years in office, he or she hasn't sold himself or herself to voters, then that incumbent is unlikely to win late-deciders or reelection.

With an extremely negative race expected, one more development should be noted. Among voters who don't like either presidential candidate, Biden currently has a strong advantage over Trump. That's a marked difference from 2016, when the 18% of the electorate that disliked both Trump and Hillary Clinton went

By **STUART ROTHENBERG**
CQ-Roll Call



for the GOP nominee by 17 points.

Obviously, Trump has scrambled our politics. It's possible (even likely) that his supporters don't participate in polls, which could be a factor if Trump overperforms on Election Day. Maybe Trump will turn out an army of previously silent whites without a college degree. Or maybe handicappers have overestimated Democratic enthusiasm, and voters of color don't turn out for Biden.

So yes, there are scenarios under which Trump loses the popular vote again but squeezes out the narrowest of Electoral College wins. We all know it is possible, although unlikely.

I expect Trump's job approval and ballot test numbers will come together again, if only when November nears. But I am more sure of this: Merely replacing Trump's ballot test number with his job approval number in a presidential matchup in the middle of a national crisis strikes me as more of an effort to prove something rather than an effort to understand what is happening in our politics.

Reversing the shutdown is scary, but we have to start revising it

The word "reopen" as applied to almost anything — doors, windows, bookstores — has acquired a touch of radioactivity in recent weeks. To talk of ending stay-at-home orders that have landed some 97% of Americans under house arrest is to risk getting lumped in with the red-hat nutters holding cuddle-party protests in a miasma of deadly microbes.

And yet it's not humanly possible to repress all longing for the old life: graduation parties, baseball games. Sleep undisturbed by COVID-19 nightmares. Oh and there used to be paychecks? And toilet paper on Amazon?

California Gov. Gavin Newsom asked on Wednesday: "When can we go back to some semblance of normalcy?"

Hear, hear. But for fear of coming off like quacky Dr. Phil, a lot of us are keeping our cravings for ordinary life to ourselves.

This is a shame. Pondering Newsom's question is not the equivalent of denying science. And proposing modifications to quarantine measures is not like saying Jesus is your vaccine.

Even if government wanted to separate the economy from the pandemic, it wouldn't be possible. The two are fatally intertwined, right down to undersupplied intensive care units and coffee shops with such tight margins that they can't last a month if we're too scared to brave a line for a cold brew.

We get this too: A shutdown economy is a public health risk.

It's clear that a grand reopening of all sectors would require virus and immunity testing that's invariably labeled "extensive." Paul Romer, an economist and Nobel laureate, suggests that if we conducted 22 million tests a day, we could keep only infected people quarantined. For reference: The U.S. now performs around 146,000 tests a day.

And strategizing about reopening is admittedly challenging when there are credible warnings that lifting any of the current mitigation practices will lead to disaster. According to a new

MIT preprint — that's a paper awaiting peer review — "relaxing or reversing quarantine measures right now ... will lead to an exponential explosion in the infected case count."

This study is authoritative, bracing and missing a few key details. What normal activities do the researchers consider lethal, and what qualifies as "relaxing or reversing" mitigation? Do they mean that a person quarantining alone should not expect to touch another human being for another six months? Or that colleges should commit to online classes until 2021? Or that if you're masked and distant, you could shop for a new sweater in a store?

Perhaps, in such a charged atmosphere, with so much at risk, we need a word that isn't "reopening." Instead of even "relaxing" or "reversing" measures, maybe we could consider "revising" them.

What might prudent revisions look like?

Here's one: Let non-COVID-19 patients back into hospitals for scheduled surgeries. On Wednesday, Newsom suggested just this, but with so much hesitation and doublespeak that he could hardly be understood.

"Based upon ... the incredible work that the hospitals have done to decompress their existing facilities and provide capacity to increase surge, and the incredible workforce that's been assembled," he said, "we are in a position to begin to pull back and lean in by beginning to schedule surgeries."

Pull back and lean in. Oy. Newsom is as anxious about announcing a minor, life-saving revision of what's going on at hospitals as he might be authorizing mask-free Coachella-scale bacchanals in every town in California.

But those aren't the choices. We need nuance.

For example, most states have acknowledged they ought to expand the definition of "essential" so that more workers — some on the job anyway — can get emergency benefits. And it's high time to permit women currently experiencing domestic violence to break quarantine norms and seek shelter away from their abusers.

And among the first places we should pull back and lean in is public school. The right of all American kids to a free education is not something we can sideline for much longer. Refusing

By **VIRGINIA HEFFERNAN**
Los Angeles Times



Virginia Heffernan is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

to even talk about a real timeline for getting students back into classrooms ladles more trauma on kids and their families, who are already managing fear, uncertainty, claustrophobia, inadequate quarantines, sickness and online funerals.

Just as we concentrated resources to get ventilators to the most hard-hit hospitals, we need to aim our testing resources at schools to get them up and running as quickly and as rationally as possible. We need to revise the physical plants and the schedules, so that social distance is possible at school.

I'm not talking about — pondering — packing Petco Stadium for a San Diego Padres game. I'm talking about commonsense revisions to the quarantine that help the neediest cases, and thus help all of us.

No one should mix up rational revisions to quarantine measures with what the state of Georgia is up to, for example. Gov. Brian Kemp announced plans to reopen Georgia's nail salons, barbershops, massage parlors, tattoo shops, restaurants and movie theaters, without rescinding his own shutdown order or gathering local input. Kemp — whose career has been pocked with truly jaw-dropping controversies, including one involving donations from an iffy massage parlor chain — evidently didn't look up "exponential explosion" before he decided nail art and back rubs were worth the confusion and the risks.

Revising current stay-at-home orders to better allocate resources is rational, and it's a discussion we can't back away from. Kemp, by contrast, is instituting a careless plan that endangers lives. The word for that is madness.

been recent reports of promising results with remdesivir, an antiviral drug meant to attack a virus' ability to replicate — as well as a recent study that went in the opposite direction. Other medications being tested prevent overreactions of the immune system, which have been implicated in the most severe cases of the disease.

Again, it is far too early to say whether either or both of these drugs, or any of the others being tested, will make a serious difference in the number of severe illnesses or deaths. More robust answers should be forthcoming over the next month or two. But Trump made a grave mistake by heavily and repeatedly promoting products for which there was too little evidence.

Trump's rashness and oversimplification of complicated issues are familiar qualities, but this time he's playing with mortality rates and the desperate hopes of a fearful nation. The job of the president is to follow the science, not the other way around.

CORONAVIRUS

From Page 8

I came to this country in 1978, at the age of 6. I was naturalized on Nov. 21, 1990, during the military buildup before the start of the Gulf War. I remember being surprised by the judge at the ceremony asking me whether I would defend my country in uniform if called upon. I wasn't expecting that question, though my friends and I had been wondering about a possible draft, and I took my time to truly consider it. I answered yes and I meant it.

I claimed the citizenship my parents wanted for me and I think I've spent my life earning it. I'm not going to let anyone tell me or anyone who looks like me that we are not really American.

If the coronavirus has taught us anything, it's that the solution to a widespread problem cannot be patchwork. Never has our interconnectedness and our reliance on each other been plainer.

You can't stand up for some and not for others. And like the virus, unchecked aggression has the potential to spread wildly. Please don't minimize the hate or assume it's somewhere far away. It's happening close to you. If you see it on the street, say something. If you hear it at work, say something. If you sense it in your family, say something. Stand up for your fellow Americans.

DESPITE

From Page 8

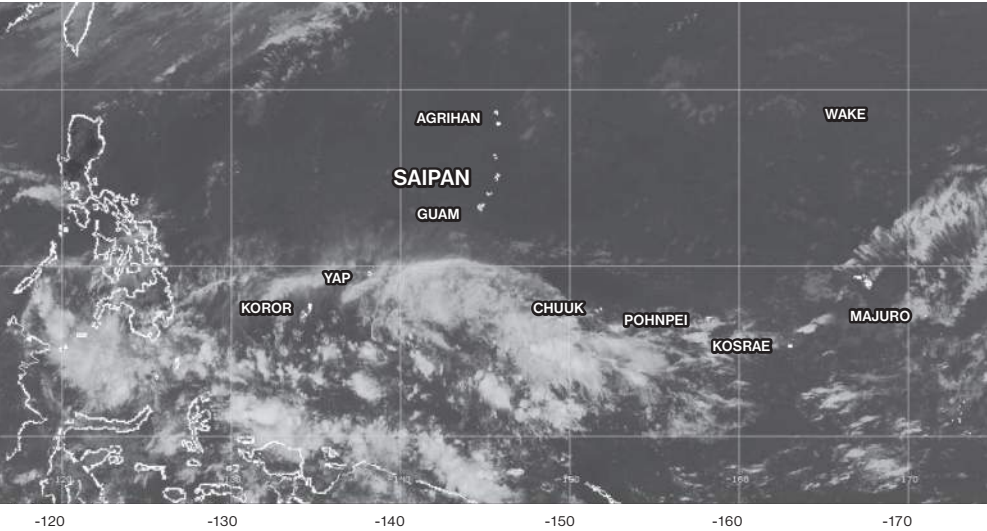
diagnostic tests. Decisive measures are needed in times of emergency. But political leaders should refrain from instilling unrealistic hope by boosting one possible treatment above all others, backed by precious little evidence. Especially when inadequate steps were taken to preserve enough of the drugs in question for the patients who really need them: people with lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

The two drugs quickly became a political rallying cry. Many Trump supporters and conservative media became early and vociferous advocates for the anti-malarials, while liberals expressed ongoing reservations about the many weaknesses of a French study that had been cited as proof of the drugs' worth.

Fortunately for everyone's health, scientists went ahead and did what scientists do: Instead of heeding the president's single-minded promotion, they have been testing numerous drugs. There have

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
89°	77°	89°	77°	88°	77°	88°	77°	88°	77°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:51 AM, MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite imagery shows a trade-wind disturbance pulling out of the Marianas after dropping up to almost an inch of rain in some places. Drier weather is seen to the east. Overnight scatterometry data showed winds of 15 to 25 mph across the region. In addition, Andersen AFB observations indicated wind gusts up to near 30 mph for several hours early this morning. Buoys and altimetry data show seas of 7 to 9 feet across the region.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87° / 76°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°	
Yap	Showers	86° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:55 AM	6:33 PM
Wednesday	5:54 AM	6:34 PM
Thursday	5:54 AM	6:34 PM
Friday	5:53 AM	6:34 PM
Saturday	5:53 AM	6:34 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	9:38 AM	11:01 PM	-
Wednesday	10:32 AM	11:55 PM	-
Thursday	11:29 AM	-	-
Friday	-	12:48 AM	12:28 PM
Saturday	-	1:38 AM	1:27 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	75° / 63°	
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	50° / 28°	
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	73° / 66°	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	80° / 69°	
London	Windy	55° / 43°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	76° / 53°	
Manila	Mostly Sunny	90° / 75°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	79° / 57°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	76° / 71°	
New York	Sunny	52° / 45°	
Osaka	Showers	57° / 50°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	59° / 46°	
Busan	Rain	55° / 46°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	64° / 46°	
Salem	Rain	62° / 53°	
San Francisco	Sunny	61° / 48°	
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	54° / 37°	
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	61° / 46°	
Washington, DC	Cloudy	61° / 51°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
5:15 AM	LOW TIDE	1.30	
9:47 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.72	
5:18 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.02	
-	-	-	

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING AS OF
APRIL 16, 2020



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

- Cashier & Customer Service**
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-4282
Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org or via phone by calling toll free 1-(855)-729-2282



Department of Public Works

- Solid Waste Management Division**
 - Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill**
Open all week except Wednesday
7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Tel: (670) 322-2745



Department of Finance

- Division of Revenue & Taxation**
CASHIER ONLY
Monday - Friday
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 664-1000
- Division of Customs Services**
 - Airport:** OPEN DAILY
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
 - Seaport:** Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
 - Chalan Kanoa Post Office:**
Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM



Department of Public Lands

- CASHIER ONLY
Monday - Thursday
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54



Saipan Zoning Office

- Available via phone only
Monday - Thursday
7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Tel: (670) 234-9661/2/3
Email: yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp
Call or email for more information



CNMI State Medicaid Agency

- Eligibility staff via phone only
Tuesday - Thursday from 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
Accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office. Medicaid application & renewal/redetermination forms must be original. Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp



Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

- Available via phone or email only on Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Tel: (670) 322-6537/38
Email: maryann@ovrgov.net



Office of the Attorney General

- Civil & Criminal Divisions**
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 237-7500/7600



Office of the Public Defender

- Monday - Friday
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Tel: (670) 234-6503



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING AS OF
APRIL 16, 2020



Department of Community and Cultural Affairs

- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**
Accepting Calls From Existing Customers Only
Tel: (670) 287-1475
- Division of Youth Services (DYS) On-Call**
Saipan: (670) 285-2780 / 287-2781 / 287-1773
Tinian: (670) 287-3268
Rota: (670) 287-2553
- Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)**
For inquiries regarding parent eligibility requirements for CCDF Program:
Tel: (670) 783-8571 / (670) 783-8572
Email: dccajguerrero@gmail.com / ccdf.jrosario@gmail.com
- Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture (CCAC)**
For Recovery Arts Grant Application Submissions. Grant Guidelines are available at <http://www.cnmiartscouncil.org>
Tel.: (670) 287-4585
Email: parkeryobei@gmail.com
- Historic Preservation Office (HPO)**
For Processing of Federal 106 Consultations Call
Tel: (670) 789-1986
Email: rchong.cnmihipo@gmail.com



Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP)
Benefit Pick Up: Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Application Pick Up: Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Application Submission:
Anytime via Drop-Box

Application Inquiries:
Tel: (670) 237-2801/2802

To download the NAP application and other forms go to dcca.gov.mp
Email: support@cnminap.gov.mp

Business

Saipan Go mobilizes you from home

By BEA CABRERA

beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The COVID-19 pandemic is definitely changing how we live. It can be limiting and frustrating to not be able to do what you were used to doing by yourself. But Saipan Go aims to change that as it officially launched yesterday finding its niche—help people continue to fulfill daily routines without ever having to leave home.

“In these hard times due to this worldwide pandemic, we deliver our services to ensure that the community within Saipan are all safe from exposure of the infection. We encourage the community of Saipan to stay home and stay safe,” said Saipan Go president Valentina Rivera.

“Our various services include food delivery from affiliated restaurants, market shopping within our Facebook page and website, post office run, and laundry delivery service with pick-up and drop off...we ensure that we follow our three main mission statements for all customers, which are reliability, trustworthiness, and cleanliness,” Rivera added.

Rivera explains how Saipan Go can be maximized by customers and uses Facebook and their website as reliable mediums for their platform. “If a customer contacts us through Facebook or our website, they are assured that we will reach back to them as quickly as we

can as we want the experience to be simple and easy for everyone. We even have an online payment in our website so it's really quick and no hassle,” she said.

“The process is when a customer chooses the service they want, we inform them of the specifics through a message and after payment confirmation, we go ahead and do what you need for us to do,” she added.

Rivera said that customers can enjoy a wide range of services aside from food delivery which they can order through Facebook or the Saipan Go website. “Laundry Drop-Off” means Saipan Go will pick up your laundry and drop it off to the laundromat and then pick it up after the attendant is done and drop it back to your location. “Market Shopping” is done by giving us a security deposit and we get the items on your grocery list for you.”

“Our Post Office Run” is either we pick up your package and drop it off to the USPS and send the package out or we can pick up your post office key and get your mail or package from your box and deliver it back to you...we are very fluid in what we can do for you like pick up a package from DHL or Customs and back to DHL and then proceed delivery to

your home,” she added.

Saipan Go has a pool of drivers that follow protocol—wearing facemasks and sanitizing hands at all times

as part of their promotion of good health, especially when handling food. Rivera said them gaining the people's trust is what also sets them

apart from similar businesses. “People know me personally and the work that I've done networking and with government agencies. I've created

Let's Learn Chamorro and Let's Learn Refaluwasch with different agencies such as the Public School System so I think a lot of people can trust us in the services we offer.

“We are just glad we're here for people and we are also proud of how quick we are to reply to questions from customers. We are kind to people and we try to route our services in the quickest way for us to deliver their items,” she added.

Saipan Go plans to provide services for the long haul and immediate plans include extending service to Rota and Tinian. “Even after the pandemic, we hope to continue to do these services for people who are too busy to go get food for lunch or dinner, laundry, market shopping, or a post office run, we want to be able to help our customers in any way they need us,” Rivera said.

“We also want to be able to shop for our brothers and sisters on Tinian and Rota. We had people ask us about doing something for them in our neighboring islands and it is really exciting...in fact, a customer who lives in Rota asked us to shop for them and so we created that service as well,” Rivera added.

For more information, you can find Saipan Go on Facebook: @saipango670 and website: market.mycnmi.com.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Go recently launched its various services to the community that includes food delivery, laundry pick-up and drop off, mail or package pick or drop off, and market shopping.

VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE OR WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS

DELIVERY SERVICE YOU CAN TRUST

SAIPAN GO

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PRICE MENU

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Laundry Delivery Drop-Off	\$6.00
Post Office Run	\$4.00-\$700

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"DELIVERY SERVICE YOU CAN TRUST"

Publicly traded hotel firms won't give back small-biz loans

Three publicly traded hotel companies tied to a Texas businessman said that they would not give back millions of dollars in loans from a government program aimed at helping small businesses.

Facing pressure from the government, several big companies, including the Potbelly and Shake Shack restaurant chains, have said they will return loans they received under the Paycheck Protection Program.

The three hotel companies, Ashford Inc., Ashford Hospitality Trust and Braemar Hotels & Resorts, which are tied to Texas hotel magnate Monty Bennett, have applied for \$126 million in loans and received \$69 million, according to a calculation from securities filings by The Associated Press. They will use the money to protect jobs, they said in a statement. Since mid-March, the companies and their hotel properties have furloughed or laid off 90% of their workforce.

“Media concerns over our receipt of PPP funds are misplaced. The PPP program was specifically designed to help companies like ours as part of the national objective of shoring up businesses and getting people back to work,” the statement said.

An Associated Press investigation showed that dozens of publicly listed companies collectively received hundreds of millions of dollars of loans from the program.

The PPP is intended to help small businesses with fewer than 500 employees. Its initial \$349 billion in funds ran out last week and the House gave final approval to \$310 billion in additional funds Thursday.

The Small Business Administration also issued an advisory Thursday clearly aimed at larger companies that took money, with new guidelines implying that unless a company can prove it was truly eligible for a loan, the money should be returned by May 7. (AP)

A flood of business bankruptcies likely in coming months

NEW YORK (AP)—The billions of dollars in coronavirus relief targeted at small businesses may not prevent many of them from ending up in bankruptcy court.

Business filings under Chapter 11 of the federal bankruptcy law rose sharply in March, and attorneys who work with struggling companies are seeing signs that more owners are contemplating the possibility of bankruptcy.

Companies forced to close or curtail business due to government attempts to stop the virus's spread have mounting debts and uncertain prospects for returning to normal operations. Even those owners receiving emergency loans and grants aren't sure that help will be enough.

The most vulnerable companies include the thousands of restaurants and retailers

that shut down, many of them more than a month ago. Some restaurants have managed to bring in a bit of revenue by serving meals for takeout and delivery, but even they are struggling financially. Small and independent retailers, including those with online stores, are similarly at risk; clothing retailers have the added problem of winter inventory that they are unlikely to sell with spring here and summer approaching.

Independent oil companies whose revenue was slammed by the collapse in energy prices also are strapped, as are other companies that were already burdened with high debt levels before the virus struck.

Jennifer Bennett, who closed one of her San Francisco restaurants on Wednesday, was still waiting for the financial aid she sought from the

federal, state and city governments. Even with the money, she doesn't know if the revenue will cover the bills when she's finally able to reopen Zazie—especially if she's required to space tables six feet apart for social distancing.

“Our occupancy is going to be cut 60% to 65%,” Bennett says. “I fear bankruptcy is a possibility.”

Other small companies have similar anxieties, says Paul Singerman, a bankruptcy attorney with Berger Singerman in Miami.

“There is no reliable visibility into when business operations will be able to resume the pre-COVID normal,” Singerman says.

Even larger companies are in trouble, including already struggling retailers who had to shut their stores.

The jeans company True Re-

ligion filed for Chapter 11 earlier this month, saying extended closures of its stores in the pandemic have hurt its business. Recent reports say department store chains Neiman Marcus and J.C. Penney, which has struggled for years with slumping sales, could soon file for bankruptcy protection.

The number of Chapter 11 filings rose 18 percent in March from a year earlier, a dramatic swing from the 20 percent decrease in February, according to the American Bankruptcy Institute, a trade organization for attorneys and other professionals involved in bankruptcy proceedings. The numbers don't break out filings by company size, but given that the vast majority of companies are small to mid-size, it does give an indication that smaller companies are struggling.

Nation

‘You are a miracle’: Home care is new front in virus fight

NEW YORK (AP)—Ruth Caballero paused outside an unfamiliar apartment door, preparing to meet her new patient.

She covered the knob with a plastic bag. Put on a surgical gown, then a heavy-duty N95 mask, a lighter surgical mask on top. Cap, face shield, shoe covers. Hand sanitizer between each step of the process. Finally, the nurse donned two sets of gloves and knocked on the door with her elbow, ready to care for her first coronavirus patient.

After about three weeks in a hospital, the man was home in his New York apartment but still so weak that sitting up in bed took some persuading.

“You made it out of the hospital, so you are a miracle,” Caballero told him. “Now let’s keep you out of the hospital.”

Home health care is becoming a new front in the national fight against COVID-19 as some patients come back from hospitals and others strive to stay out of them.

Home care nurses, aides and attendants—who normally help an estimated 12 million Americans with everything from bathing to IV medications—are now taking on the difficult and potentially dangerous task of caring for coronavirus patients.

While Americans are being told to keep to themselves, home health providers and their clients still largely have to engage in person, often in-



In this Thursday, April 23, 2020 photo, Ruth Caballero, a nurse with The Visiting Nurse Service of New York, suits up in protective equipment before treating a COVID-19 patient on her rounds in upper Manhattan in New York.

timately. Many agencies are ramping up phone or video visits but can’t always get paid for them, and even the smartest phone can’t physically dress a wound or get someone to the bathroom.

Like their colleagues in hospitals and nursing homes, home care workers have faced a scarcity of protective equipment, but with a lower

public profile. Some agencies have scoured for masks at nail salons, auto body shops and tattoo parlors, said William Dombi, president of the National Association for Home Care and Hospice, an industry group.

The crisis is testing the industry, but it’s also a moment of pride for workers who have often felt under-recognized.

“It is a challenge to keep the business operational, but it’s an opportunity,” Dombi said. “We’re getting a chance to establish what can be done.”

Coronavirus care at home has expanded rapidly in the last few weeks. At least some agencies in most states are now taking COVID-19 patients referred after hospitalization or nursing home care or as an alternative to them, Dombi said.

Still, some patients have struggled to get care. After being diagnosed with corona-

virus-related pneumonia late last month, Penny Wittbrodt contacted multiple agencies around her home in Winchester, Kentucky. None was then accepting COVID-19 patients, she said, though her doctor was able to arrange home oxygen. Wittbrodt, who has asthma and a history of respiratory hospitalizations, is still not well, though she’s had some relief at times.

A retired home health nurse, Wittbrodt feels such care is especially valuable in

the pandemic.

“Home health would expose far less people to COVID than hospitalization,” she said.

New York-based Americare Inc. has taken about 100 COVID-19 patients released from hospitals, and over 200 of the agency’s other patients also have tested positive or shown symptoms, VP Bridget Gallagher said.

Every corporate staffer including the CEO is calling protective gear suppliers, but the agency still counts its stock of N95 masks every day.

“We’re doing what we can, but I have to be honest: None of it feels like enough,” said Gallagher, who’s also on the board of the Home Care Association of New York State.

For many agencies, chronic staff shortages are amplified by absences due to illness or quarantine. And workers are grappling with patients’ fears while reckoning with their own risk.

The surgical mask and gloves that Washington home health aide Adassa Clarke now wears rattle her patient, who has Alzheimer’s disease and relies on a wheelchair. The patient doesn’t have COVID-19 but can’t retain what she’s been told about an illness going around.

“What’s going on? Do I have a germ? Am I dying?” she asks, according to Clarke. Sometimes, the patient breaks into tears.

At 65, Clarke herself is in an age group at higher risk of severe cases of COVID-19, and she’s trying to stay home as much as she can.

US states build stockpiles of malaria drug touted by Trump

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—State and local governments across the United States have obtained about 30 million doses of a malaria drug touted by President Trump to treat patients with the coronavirus, despite warnings from doctors that more research is needed.

At least 22 states and Washington, D.C., secured shipments of the drug, hydroxychloroquine, according to information compiled from state and federal officials by The Associated Press. Sixteen of those states were won by Trump in 2016, although five of them, including North Carolina and Louisiana, are now led by Democratic governors.

Supporters say having a supply on hand makes sense in case the drug is shown to be effective against the pandemic that has devastated the global economy and killed nearly 200,000 people worldwide, and to ensure a steady supply for people who need it for other conditions like lupus.

But health experts worry

that having the drug easily available at a time of heightened public fear could make it easier to misuse it. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Friday warned doctors against prescribing the drug, hydroxychloroquine, for treating the coronavirus outside of hospitals or research settings because of reports of serious side effects, including dangerous irregular heart rhythms and death among patients.

It’s the latest admonition against the drug that Trump mentioned 17 times in various public appearances, touting its potential despite his own health advisors telling him it is unproven.

Oklahoma spent \$2 million to buy the drugs, and Utah and Ohio have spent hundreds of thousands on purchases. The rest of the cities and states received free shipments from drug companies or the U.S. government over the last month. Ohio received a large donation from a local company.

Several states including New York, Connecticut, Oregon, Louisiana, North Carolina and Texas received donations of the medication from a private company based in New Jersey called Amneal Pharmaceutical. Florida was given 1 million doses from Israeli company Teva Pharmaceutical.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency said Friday it has sent out 14.4 million doses of hydroxychloroquine to 14 cities, including Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and Baltimore, from the federal government’s national stockpile, a source that also provided South Dakota and California with supplies. The agency said earlier this month it had sent 19 million tablets and didn’t explain the discrepancy between the two figures. The U.S. government received a donation of 30 million doses from Swiss drugmaker Novartis on March 29 to build up the stockpile, which does not normally stock the drug.

Police: 1 officer dies, 2nd wounded in Louisiana shooting

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP)—A shooting in Louisiana’s capital city left one police officer dead and his wounded colleague fighting for his life Sunday, authorities said, adding a suspect was later taken into custody after an hourslong standoff in which shots were exchanged with a SWAT team.

Baton Rouge Police Chief Murphy Paul told The Advocate the two officers were shot in a northern residential district in the city, and that one of the officers later succumbed.

Paul said a suspect, Ronnie Kato, 36, was detained after a roughly four-hour standoff in which he barricaded inside a house. The chief didn’t immediately say what charges Kato might face. He added that SWAT team members had been fired on and they returned fire. No one was reported hurt during those exchanges.

Police said the officers who were shot had responded earlier in the day to reports of gunfire in the area.

At a news conference Sunday evening, the police chief said the slain officer was a 21-year law enforcement veteran and that the wounded colleague had seven years of police work, according to WBRZ-TV. The chief did not immediately identify the officers.

The second officer was “fighting for his life,” Paul added at a news briefing Sunday evening.

“Our officers—talk about being public servants and the responsibility that comes along with being a law enforcement officer,” Paul said. “This is a call no chief wants to get.”

Police released few details about the shooting of the two officers or events that led up to it. The chief said only that

police continue to investigate.

On Sunday afternoon, neighbors and onlookers crowded street corners behind police tape that cordoned off the area, according to media reports. Some of the bystanders wore masks against the coronavirus and others held up phones to record the crush of law enforcement vehicles at the site.

A different scene unfolded outside Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, where the officers had been whisked by ambulance. There, dozens of law enforcement officers held an impromptu vigil at the hospital, awaiting updates on the wounded officer’s condition.

A coroner’s van was seen Sunday afternoon being escorted away by dozens of law enforcement vehicles as it left the hospital, according to media reports.

Asia

Low-tech Japan challenged in work-from-home setup



AP

In this Feb. 20, 2020, file photo, people wear masks as they commute during the morning rush hour, in Chuo district in Tokyo.

TOKYO (AP)—When the Japanese government declared an emergency to curb the spread of the coronavirus earlier this month and asked people to work from home, crowds rushed to electronics stores.

So much for social distancing.

Many Japanese lack the basic tools needed to work from home. Contrary to the ultra-modern image of Japan Inc. with its robots, design finesse and gadgetry galore, in many respects the country is technologically challenged.

But the bigger obstacle is Japanese corporate culture, experts say. Offices still often rely on faxes instead of email. Many homes lack high-speed internet connections, and documents often must be stamped in-person with carved seals called “hanko,” which serve as signatures. So many Japanese really cannot work remotely, at least not all the time.

A survey by YouGov, a British market researcher, found only 18% of those recently surveyed were able to avoid commuting to school or work, even though a relatively high 80% of people in Japan are afraid of catching the virus.

In India, nearly 70% of those surveyed were staying home. In the U.S., it was about 30%, according to YouGov.

One factor, says Yuri Tazawa, a pioneer in Japan of “teleworking,” or working from home, is that Japanese workers often do not have clearly defined jobs like Americans do, so companies expect their staff to be in constant communication with each other, working as teams.

“But this is a matter of life

and death for the workers and their families,” said Tazawa, president of Telework Management Inc. “We need to do immediately what we can do now.”

Tazawa is offering an online crash course on how to immediately start working from home, using just mobile phones, if a personal computer is not available. She calls the approach a “hypothetical cloud office.”

Unlike regular Zoom meetings, in which workers check in and out for discussions, she is proposing using Zoom for just voice connections, keeping it on throughout the work day so that employees who would normally share an office can feel as if they’re in the same room.

“Teleworking is so important in the fight against the coronavirus,” said Tazawa.

Some of Japan’s biggest companies, like Toyota Motor Corp. and Sony Corp., already have announced work-from-home policies. The main problem is with the small and medium-sized businesses which make up about 70% of the economy.

Nicholas Benes, a corporate governance expert who has been offering a free webinar on teleworking for Japanese, said interest was surprisingly low.

A lack of up-to-date IT systems means Japan lags in nurturing flexible work practices, office rules, management methods and even attitudes toward remote work. It’s one factor contributing to relatively low labor productivity.

“Telework requires that managers trust and delegate

much more decision-making to employees because it takes too much time in email or Skype to check with the boss,” said Benes, who heads the Board Director Training Institute of Japan, a non-profit that offers management and governance training.

Japanese companies still rely on nuances of face-to-face interaction, or being able to “smell the air,” or “read the air,” Benes said, using common vernacular expressions.

And then, there’s the fax machine.

A third of Japanese households have faxes, according to a government study.

It’s rare to find an office that doesn’t have one, unless it’s a futuristic company like SoftBank that frowns on such old-fashioned practices. Many respectable institutions shun emails and insist on receiving requests for information or other documentation by fax only.

So as the number of coronavirus infections grows, urban commuter trains are only slightly less crowded than their usual jam-packed state.

Futoshi Takami, a “salaryman,” as Japanese workers are called, says he had to work from the office until mid-April, when he was finally told he could work from home. But so far, he’s gotten few directions about what he’s supposed to be doing. He might soon be assigned to take some online classes, he said.

Takami, who asked that his employer not be identified, said he has been doing some soul-searching about workplaces that seem to value rules over human life.

World

AS VIRUS LOCKDOWN EASES

Italy ponders what went wrong

ROME (AP)—As Italy prepares to emerge from the West’s first and most extensive coronavirus lockdown, it is increasingly clear that something went terribly wrong in Lombardy, the hardest-hit region in Europe’s hardest-hit country.

Italy had the bad luck of being the first Western nation to be slammed by the outbreak, and its total of 26,600 fatalities lags behind only the U.S. in the global death toll. Italy’s first homegrown case was recorded Feb. 21, at a time when the World Health Organization was still insisting the virus was “containable” and not nearly as infectious as the flu.

But there’s also evidence that demographics and health care deficiencies combined with political and business interests to expose the 10 million people in the northern Italian region of Lombardy in ways unseen anywhere else, particularly the most vulnerable in nursing homes.

Virologists and epidemiologists say what went wrong there will be studied for years, given how the outbreak overwhelmed a medical system considered one of Europe’s best. In neighboring Veneto, the impact was significantly more controlled.

Prosecutors are deciding whether to lay any criminal blame for the hundreds of dead in nursing homes, many of whom aren’t even counted in Lombardy’s official death toll of 13,325.

By contrast, Lombardy’s front-line doctors and nurses are being hailed as heroes for risking their lives to treat the sick under extraordinary levels of stress, exhaustion, isolation and fear.

Even after Italy registered its first homegrown case, doctors didn’t understand the unusual way COVID-19 could present itself, with some patients experiencing a rapid decline in their ability to breathe.

“This was clinical information we didn’t have,” said Dr. Maurizio Marvisi, a pneumologist at the San Camillo private clinic in hard-hit Cremona.

Because Lombardy’s intensive care units were filling up within days of Italy’s first cases, many primary care physicians tried to treat and monitor their patients at home, even putting them on supplemental oxygen. That strategy proved deadly, since many people died at home or soon after being hospitalized, having waited too long to call an ambulance.

Italy was forced to rely on home care in part because of

its low ICU capacity: After years of budget cuts, Italy went into the emergency with 8.6 ICU beds per 100,000 people, below the average of 15.9 within the developed countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

As a result, Italy’s primary care physicians became the front-line filter of COVID-19 patients, an army of mostly self-employed general practitioners who work outside the public hospital system.

Since only those showing strong symptoms were being tested because Lombardy’s labs couldn’t process any more, these family doctors didn’t know if they themselves were positive, much less their patients.

The doctors also had no guidelines on when to admit the sick or refer them to specialists and didn’t have the same access to protective equipment as hospitals.

Some 20,000 Italian medical personnel have been infected and 150 doctors have died.

Two days after Italy registered its first case in the Lombardy province of Lodi, sparking a quarantine in 10 towns, another positive case was registered more than an hour’s drive away in Alzano in the province of Bergamo.

Boris Johnson returns to face growing virus divisions in UK

LONDON (AP)—British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is returning to work after recovering from a coronavirus infection that put him in intensive care, with his government facing growing criticism over the deaths and disruption the virus has caused.

Johnson’s office said he would be back at his desk in 10 Downing St. on Monday, two weeks after he was released from a London hospital. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, who has been standing in for the prime minister, said Sunday that Johnson—the only world leader to be diagnosed with the coronavirus—was “raring to go.”

Britain has recorded 20,732 deaths among people hospitalized with COVID-19, the fifth country in the world to surpass 20,000 deaths. Thousands more are thought to have died in nursing homes.

Johnson, 55, spent a week at St. Thomas’ Hospital, including three nights in intensive care, where he was given oxygen and watched around

the clock by medical workers. After he was released on April 12, he recorded a video message thanking staff at the hospital for saving his life.

Johnson hasn’t been seen in public since, as he recovered at Chequers, the prime minister’s country retreat outside London.

While he convalesced, Britain’s coronavirus death toll has mounted, with another 413 virus-related deaths announced Sunday.

Opposition politicians say Britain’s death toll could have been lower if Johnson’s Conservative government had imposed a nationwide lockdown sooner. But they are also demanding to know when and how the government will ease the restrictions that were imposed March 23 and run to at least May 7.

Some people and businesses are growing impatient with the restrictions, which have brought much of the economy and daily life to a halt. Road traffic has begun to creep up after plummeting when the lockdown first

was imposed, and some businesses have begun to reopen after implementing social-distancing measures.

“Decisions need to be taken quicker and communication with the public needs to be clearer,” opposition Labour Party leader Keir Starmer said in a letter to Johnson.

“The British public have made great sacrifices to make the lockdown work,” he wrote. “They deserve to be part of an adult conversation about what comes next.”

But Johnson’s government, facing criticism for being too slow to impose the lockdown, appears in no hurry to end it. Raab said there would be no dramatic sudden change to the restrictions.

“We won’t just have this binary easing up of measures. We will end up moving to a new normal,” he told the BBC. “We need to take a sure-footed step forward which protects life but also preserves our way of life. So we are very focused on doing the homework that can allow us to do that.”

Overdrive

Auto giants across the globe warned of coming 'credit shock'

By OLIVER SACHGAU,
CHRISTOPH RAUWALD
AND KEITH NAUGHTON
BLOOMBERG NEWS

BMW AG, Ford Motor Co. and Toyota Motor Corp. were downgraded by Moody's Investors Service and their major European, U.S. and Japanese competitors were put under review for possible cuts as the coronavirus pandemic raises risks for automakers worldwide.

BMW, the European carmaker with the best credit profile, was dropped one level to A2, while Ford's rating fell to Ba2, another rung into junk. Moody's put General Motors Co. under review along with Daimler AG, Jaguar Land Rover Automotive Plc, PSA Group, Renault SA, Volkswagen AG, Volvo Car AB and McLaren Holdings Ltd. In Japan, Toyota, Nissan Motor Co. and Honda Motor Co. were downgraded on Thursday.

The rapid spread of the outbreak, a deteriorating economic outlook, falling oil prices and asset price declines are "creating a severe and extensive credit shock," Moody's said in a statement. "The combined credit effects of these developments are unprecedented."

Auto manufacturers and their parts suppliers have halted factories on both sides of the Atlantic amid government measures to isolate populations and restrict travel. The wave of work stoppages occurred as the viral epicenter moved to Europe from China and intensified in the U.S., halting sales and rippling through supply chains.

Demand will drop "meaningfully" over the coming months, especially in Europe and North America, Moody's said. It anticipates global de-



mand will shrink about 14% in 2020 and could slump by roughly a third in the second quarter.

'Under Pressure'

Japanese automakers are especially vulnerable because of the pandemic exacerbating "pronounced cyclical downturns and changing consumer demand," Moody's said, leaving them "vulnerable to shifts in market sentiment in these unprecedented operating conditions."

Toyota, which had the strongest credit profile among Japan's auto companies, was cut to A1 from Aa3, while

Honda was downgraded to A3 from A2. Nissan, which has seen decade-low profits and management turmoil since the November 2018 arrest of former Chairman Carlos Ghosn, was already the lowest in terms of credit ratings out of Japan's top three carmakers. Moody's cut Nissan's rating to Baa3 from Baa1.

Moody's for now assumes GM and Ford's full-year shipments will drop by as much as 18%, though it warned "risk to the downside is considerable." GM shares pared a gain of as much as 9.6% to close up only 1.8% in New York. Ford, which had surged as much as

19% intraday, finished the day with an 8.9% advance.

S&P Global Ratings still ranks Ford one step above junk. On Wednesday, the firm also put GM's rating on watch for negative action.

"Automaker credit rankings are increasingly under pressure—another negative catalyst for bondholders—and we suspect more downgrades loom globally, with Ford and Renault possibly becoming fallen angels," Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Joel Levington said in a note.

While GM probably can avoid a junk rating, falling into speculative grade causes prob-

lems for automakers' lending units, Levington said by phone. Both GM and Ford get lots of cash from writing auto loans, and lower-rated debt makes borrowing more expensive.

"It's not the end of the world if one of these companies falls into high-yield," he said. "But both Ford and GM make a lot of money from financing and their margins would go down."

State Support

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire this week pointed to the country's auto and aeronautics industries as needing government support. The state

BMW was among several leading global car makers that were downgraded by Moody's Investors Service in anticipation of a credit shock resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.

has holdings in Renault and PSA. While Renault Chairman Jean-Dominique Senard has dismissed a re-nationalization of the carmaker, he told Le Parisien the firm may ask for government guarantees. Renault shares rose as much as 2.8% in Paris.

VW brand's global sales chief Juerger Stackmann told Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung in interview he expects a "normalization" of the situation on the German manufacturer's home turf in the summer. The coronavirus won't disappear entirely by then, but society and the economy can't cope with a shutdown that lasts for longer, he said.

The outlier in Moody's latest report was Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV, placed under review "with uncertain direction." The Italian-American manufacturer faces the same daunting situation as peers, but the planned merger with PSA might potentially result in a higher rating of the combined group than Fiat Chrysler's current standalone rating, it said.

BMW's downgrade was driven by its already weak standing within the A1 ratings category, the agency said.

The Munich-based carmaker last week warned that both profit and sales would fall significantly this year as the pandemic disrupts production and supplies. The company has idled its European plants, as well as its largest plant in the U.S. in South Carolina, for more than two weeks.

Under the Hood: Mechanic is overselling danger or worn bushings

Q: I went to the Toyota dealer for an 85,000-mile service of my 2013 Sienna, which is just tire rotation. They showed me the cabin and engine filters were needed, and they did a fuel induction and throttle body service.

They also showed me a video of the lower control arms, which look cracked.

Anyway, after telling them that \$3,500 for mostly labor was too much, they went down to \$2,500, including alignment and rental car for two days. Is that still too much though? Other than an occasional braking noise, I haven't ex-

perienced any other issues, but they said that this can be dangerous. Your opinion?

A: Based on the services you were sold, the pictures you provided of the bushings, and their use of the "D" word, I'd steer clear of this place in the future!

Control arm bushings are sturdy rubber couplings that insulate the connection between the lower control arms and vehicle chassis, somewhat similar in function to a human's hip joint. Should the rubber bushing degrade, unwanted looseness begins to occur, somewhat affecting wheel alignment. If the

bushing is severely degraded, you'll hear a clunking noise when going over bumps or when turning. Joint retention would still exist, regardless of bushing condition. Symptoms of worn bushings include steering wander, excessive tire wear and possibly knocking sounds.

Your bushings showed surface cracking, which is to be expected over time. Besides a visual inspection, applying force to the unloaded joint with a tool such as a pry bar can gauge the snugness of the bushing. Based solely on the photos you sent, I'd say the bushings are still in very ser-

viceable condition, perhaps degraded by 20%. A physical inspection would of course be better than what I can tell from photos. Deep cracks that allow excessive movement are more serious.

If you need to renew the bushings, there are several options. Perhaps the most convenient would be to simply renew the control arms (aftermarket kits are available containing both left and right complete arms for \$100-150). Pressing new bushings into your existing arms can also be done. There is a second smaller bushing to contend with as well (parts are per-

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
Tribune News Service

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haps \$50-75 plus specialized labor to press the bushings out/in). Labor time to remove and replace the control arms (left and right) is 8.2 hours (seems a bit generous) plus wheel alignment.

I have to say the hairs on the back of my neck began to stand up as I read of the filters and throttle body/induction cleaning, prior to what you

told me of the bushings. While perhaps needed and beneficial, these are profit generators of the first degree, and the recommendation of replacing what appears to be average condition bushings tells me—run from this place! There are plenty of other auto repair facilities around that will advocate for your needs first and their gross profit second.

Life & Style

Brad Pitt portrays Fauci in SNL's 2nd at-home edition

NEW YORK (AP)—Brad Pitt portrayed Dr. Anthony Fauci in the second at-home episode of "Saturday Night Live," that featured musical guest Miley Cyrus, an Adam Sandler cameo and plenty of disinfectant jokes.

A bespectacled Pitt, speaking in Fauci's raspy voice, tried to recast false assurances and misstatements pitched by President

Donald Trump during the pandemic, for instance when Trump said there'd be a COVID-19 vaccine "relatively soon."

"Relatively soon is an interesting phrase. Relative to the entire history of earth? Sure, the vaccine is going to come real fast," said Pitt's Fauci, seated at a desk behind a state-of-the-art bookcase. "But if you were going to tell a friend, 'I'll be

over relatively soon' and then showed up a year and a half later, well, your friend may be relatively pissed off."

The episode was the show's second "quarantine edition," with pre-recorded segments at actors' homes delving into the frustrations and touchstones of quarantine life, but, of course, with an SNL twist.

Sandler and Pete David-

son teamed up to mock being cooped up with family for a musical duet called "Stuck In The House," another sketch featured a Zoom version of "Law and Order" and another poked fun at zealous fitness moved online during the pandemic with one boasting of "eating clean" by preparing a "Clorox juice" cleanse.

Cyrus, sitting fireside with a guitar, performed Pink Floyd's "Wish You Were Here."

Pitt's depiction followed a Fauci interview on CNN when he jokingly said he thought Pitt should portray him when he was asked to choose between Ben Stiller or Pitt. The cold open also featured Trump's far-fetched statements earlier

this week about disinfectant and light being studied in the fight against the virus.

"When I hear things like the virus can be cured if everyone takes the Tide Pod Challenge, I'll be there to say, 'Please don't,'" said Pitt's Fauci, before he broke character, took off his wig and paid tribute to Fauci and thanked him.

Parisians defy lockdown by dancing, briefly, in the street

LE PECQ, France (AP)—The itch to dance, to break out of coronavirus lockdown and bust a few moves in the fresh air, out on the street, has proved too strong for some to resist in Paris after weeks of staying home.

Video of Parisians dancing in the street this weekend, some wearing face masks, triggered buzz and criticism on social networks and an apology Sunday from the out-

of-work theater technician who blasted the music from his balcony.

Nathan Sebbagh has been thanking medics and trying to keep people's spirits up with half-hour hip-shaking musical selections on Saturday evenings.

But his goodwill gesture, which he dubs @discobalcon, in his Instagram postings, this weekend became a victim of its own success.

Police knocked at his door

and gave him a talking to after a small but frisky crowd gathered and danced under the balcony of his apartment in Montmartre.

"There were a lot of people. The square was quite full. Some people were far too close," Sebbagh acknowledged somewhat sheepishly in a phone interview Sunday.

The police "said that music on balconies is a very good idea but not like this, it's too dangerous," he said.

Among his musical offerings on Saturday was "Let me Dance" by Egyptian-born songbird Dalida. She lived in Montmartre before her death in 1987 and a square is named in her honor.

Video posted by a journalist showed police vehicles rolling up as the song played and people danced. The images provoked hostile comments on social media, with critics arguing that such behavior during France's lockdown in place since March 17 risked spreading the virus.



In this screengrab provided by NBC, Brad Pitt portrays Dr. Anthony Fauci in the second at-home episode of "Saturday Night Live," which aired Saturday, April 25, 2020. AP



In this file photo dated Friday, April 24, 2020, a man wears a mask to protect against the spread of the coronavirus as he walks along the Trocadero square close to the Eiffel Tower in Paris. AP

Harold Reid, Statler Brothers bass singer, dies at 80

STAUNTON, Va. (AP)—Harold Reid, who sang bass for the Grammy-winning country group the Statler Brothers, has died after a long battle with kidney failure. He was 80.

Reid died Friday in his hometown of Staunton, Virginia, his nephew Debo Reid said.

The Statler Brothers frequently sang backup for country icon Johnny Cash. Some

of their biggest hits included 1965's "Flowers on the Wall" and 1970's "Bed of Rose's."

Harold Reid was a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame and the Gospel Music Hall of Fame. He was also a comedian.

"He is and will always be loved by his family, friends and millions of fans," a statement on the band's website said. "His singing, his songwriting

and his comedy made generations happy. He has taken a piece of our hearts with him."

Reid and three boyhood friends—Lew DeWitt, Phil Balsley and Joe McDorman—formed the Four-Star Quartet in 1948. The group, later known as the Kingsmen, sang mostly gospel music. McDorman quit and was replaced by Don Reid, Harold's younger brother.

Wife laughs off man's pleas to end their long marriage

DEAR ABBY: I have a problem I can't fix. I have been married for 54 years. For the last 20 we have slept in different bedrooms. I get no affection from my wife, and everything has to be her way. We no longer have anything in common except our children and grandchildren who, for the most part, come to me only when they need something.

Over the years, we have drifted apart, and there is no longer anything we enjoy doing together. I have told her many times that for my mental health we should part ways. She laughs and shrugs it off. Basically, to her I am a paycheck.

She thinks we don't have a problem. Her parents lived pretty much the same way. I need someone who will sit with me when we go out to dinner, hold hands in public, have a couple of similar interests, share the same bed, etc.

I have met a woman online who seems to care and who wants to be with me. I haven't followed through, but every time I'm verbally abused, it's pushing me more and more toward her. Help.

UNHAPPY IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR UNHAPPY: Tell your wife you are making an appointment with a licensed marriage and family therapist to discuss your marital situation. It may be the wakeup call she needs to get her to quit laughing and pay attention to the fact that you are seriously unhappy. Ask her to go with you, but if she refuses, follow through and go without her. It may help you emotionally as you disengage from this marriage.

If you do end the marriage, recognize there will have to be a fair distribution of any assets that accumulated and be pre-

pared to discuss your options with more than one lawyer. A word of caution, however: Do NOT immediately rush into a romantic relationship with someone you know only through the internet. It is crucial that you take the necessary time to detoxify and regain your balance after you exit this marriage.

DEAR ABBY: My mom passed away a year and a few months ago. My parents were married for 38 years.

Dad started a whirlwind romance with a lady about nine months after Mom's death. Their relationship lasted three months, and they were supposed to get married. She blindsided him by breaking the engagement a month before the wedding. The breakup was because she still has feelings for an ex-husband and had nothing to do with my dad.

He keeps talking to her "as a friend," but he is miserable because he's in love with her. Ever since the breakup, she gets nasty and criticizes him about small things. She is not even a good friend.

I want my father to be happy and find someone who will love him. But he continues to call and text this woman, even though it makes him sink deeper into depression every day. He keeps thinking she'll take him back, but I don't see it happening. How can I convince Daddy to cut off all contact with her?

WHAT'S BEST FOR DAD IN GEORGIA

DEAR WHAT'S BEST: I'm not sure you are the person to do that. It might be better to enlist the aid of a male relative or close friend—someone who knows what has been going on. Your father might be more receptive to that mes-

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



sage if he hears it from a contemporary. If not, he may have to learn his lesson the hard way.

DEAR READERS: For those of you having trouble coping with stress and anxiety during this challenging time, Jack Drescher, M.D., respected psychiatrist, psychoanalyst and member of the American Psychoanalytic Association, contacted me offering a resource for emotional health matters related to the coronavirus crisis. For more information, go to psychologytoday.com/us/blog/psychoanalysis-unplugged-0.

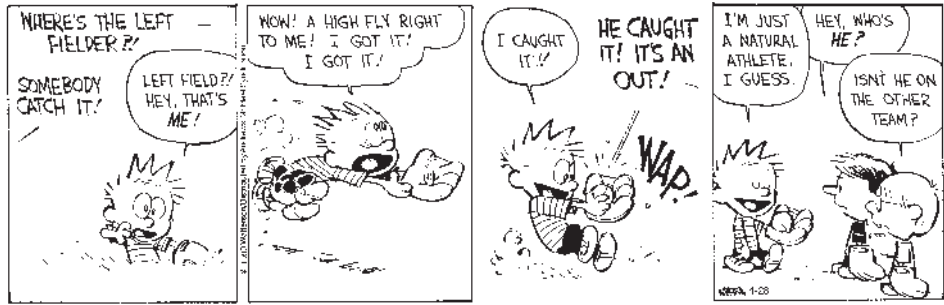
LOVE, ABBY

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

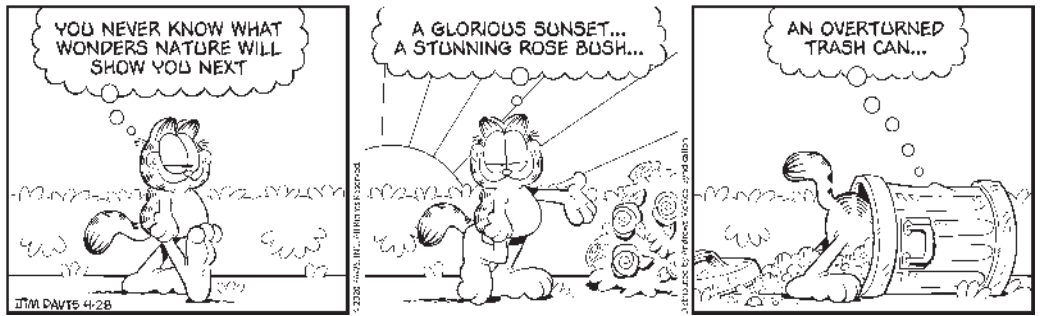
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Pieces for one

5 Awestruck

9 Dandy

12 Goad

13 Maui meal

14 "I love," in Latin

15 Apple pastry, for example

17 007 creator

18 Former L.A. Laker

19 Wizard Potter

21 Barn areas

24 Wild revelry

25 Kimono ties

26 Went off course

30 Fleur-de-

31 Rocky debris

32 "Love Story" actress

MacGraw

DOWN

1 Tanning lotion

2 Bruins

3 Singer

4 Buffoons

5 Sax

6 Pacific island

7 Rowing need

8 Arlo or Woody

9 "Rapunzel," e.g.

10 Actor

11 Shetland, for one

16 QBs' goals

20 Khan title

21 "Damn Yankees" vamp

22 Final notice

23 Mexican seafood snacks

24 It takes the cake

26 609, in ancient Rome

27 Epoch

28 Panache

29 Darkens

31 Took a whiff of

34 Mess up

35 Movie theater

37 Set afire

38 Long story

39 Gator's kin

40 Alum

41 Arsenal supply

44 Commotion

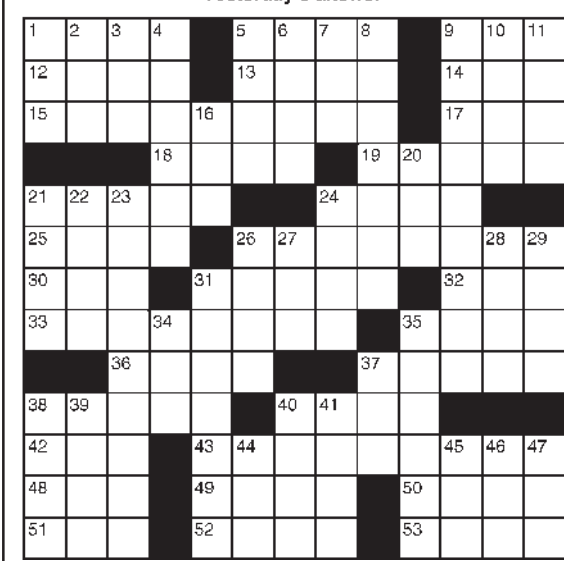
45 MSN alternative

46 Swab the decks

47 Rds.

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 4-28



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jessica Alba, 39; Penelope Cruz, 46; Jay Leno, 70; Ann-Margret, 79.

Happy Birthday: Speak openly and offer suggestions. Use charm and finesse to persuade others to see things your way. A calm but ambitious demeanor will be far more attractive than aggressive behavior and anger. Use intelligence to get your way and realistic plans to avoid opposition. Progress will be yours. Make a personal change that will help ease stress. Your numbers are 8, 15, 23, 26, 38, 43, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Look at every option before making a decision. Refuse to let your emotions take over or cause you to take action too quickly. Put your energy into something constructive, and you will avoid getting involved in a debate. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Reconnect with people you collaborated with in the past, and you will come up with exciting options. An unexpected opening will interest you before you make a decision; consider the pros and cons. Don't feel pressured to make a decision. ★★★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't make promises or let anyone take advantage of you. Protect against illness and con artists. Do your best to stay fit, and keep busy doing things that are beneficial to you. Get down to business, and take care of responsibilities. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You have everything in place but your confidence. Stop making excuses, and start believing

in yourself and your ability to surpass any competition you encounter. Once you take the first step toward your goal, everything else will fall into place. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Keep a low profile, and go about your business. If you complain or fall short on a promise, you will be subject to scrutiny. Take care of your responsibilities before you point the finger at someone for his or her shortcomings. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Rely on friends, relatives and peers for help to get things done on time. An opportunity will present itself if you network, or you can make a change to the way you do things. Upset and arguments will be wastes of time. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll face opposition at home and work. Don't make waves or neglect your responsibilities. The less that others have to complain about, the easier it will be for you to sail through your work with time to spare for enjoyment. ★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take care of business, and move on to more pleasurable tasks. A creative endeavor will be enlightening. Collaborating with people who enjoy the same things you do will inspire you to spend more time doing the things you enjoy most. ★★★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take a close look at your schedule before you offer your time or your services to others. You may like to help, but if you take on too much, you will jeopardize your health or your reputation. ★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Personal situations can be dealt with if you address your concerns openly. An adjustment you make at home or to your way of life will end up having more benefits than anticipated. Don't get angry; get busy improving your experience. ★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Be careful what you say or reveal about yourself or those close to you. Someone will use personal information against you if given a chance. Focus on self-improvement, fitness, health and romantic encounters. Walk away from drama and emotional manipulation. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Choose the path less traveled. Try something you've never done, or venture out with people who have something to offer. Live, learn and be open to suggestions as well as change. A financial gain looks promising. ★★★★★

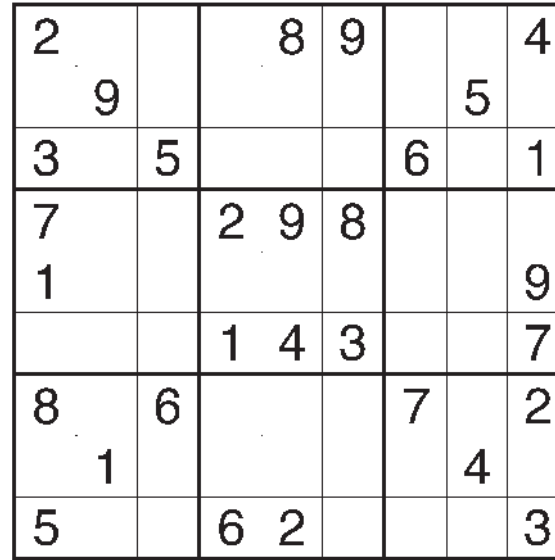
Birthday Baby: You are intuitive, compassionate and tenacious. You are meticulous and helpful.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

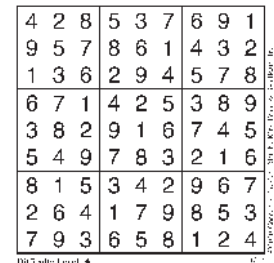
By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



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WONDERWORD

By DAVID CUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

SINGING LULLABIES

Solution: 6 letters



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Baby, Band, Bear, Beat, Birth, Calm, Care, Classic, Composer, Country, Cozy, Cradle, Crib, Cuddling, Emotion, Feed, Happy, Hum, Hush, Infant, Karaoke, Language, Laugh, Listen, Lyrics, Melody, Moon, Mother, Music, Night, Nursery, Nurture, Pacifier, Parents, Peace, Piano, Relax, Rhyme, Rhythm, Sleep, Smile, Soft, Song, Star, Talk, Teddy, Toddler, Tune, Twinkle, Vocal, Voice

Yesterday's Answer: Blueberries
To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 40, 42, and 44 through 58 order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Rodman plays big role in Bulls titles



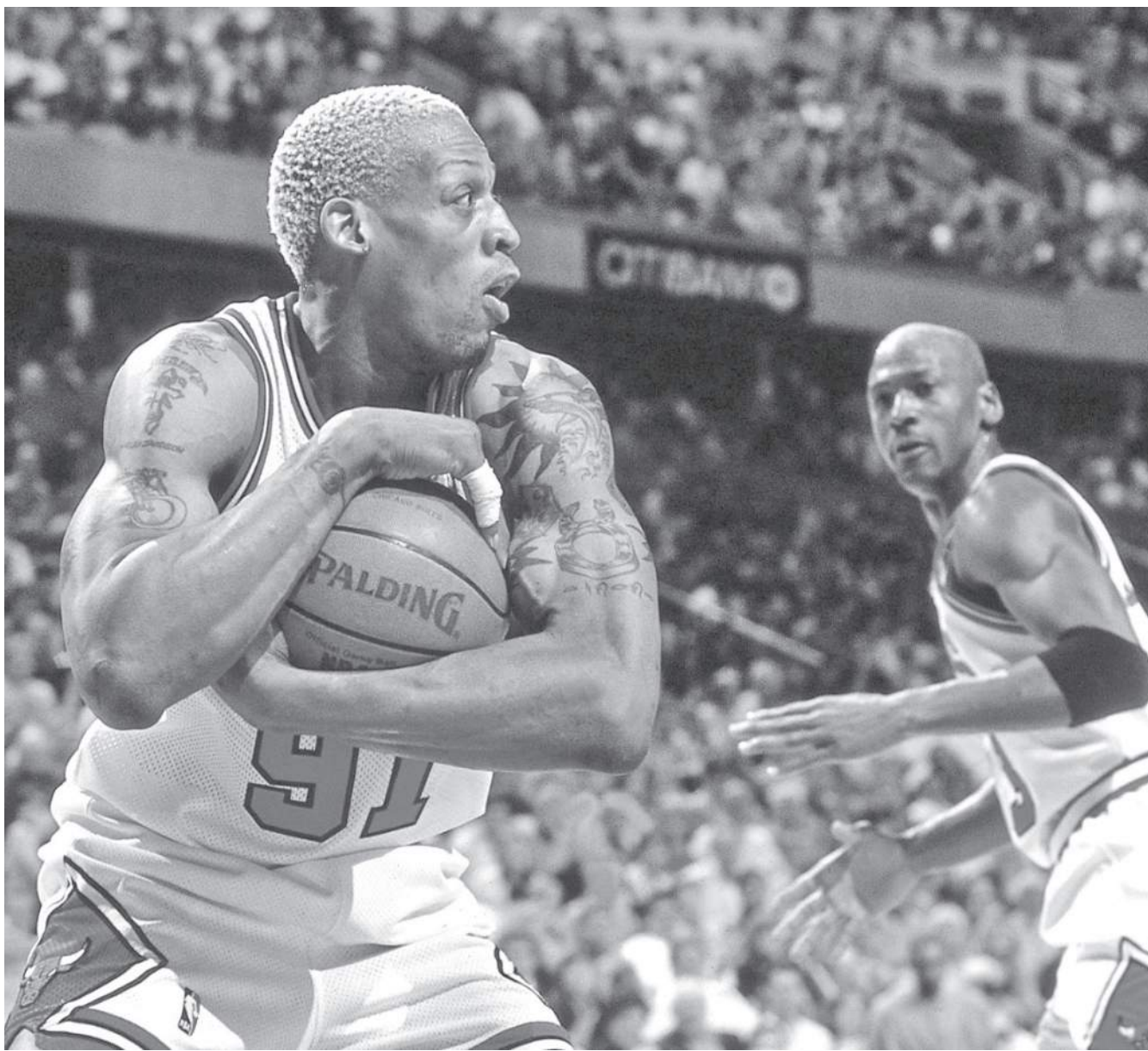
LOS ANGELES (AP)—Dennis Rodman was one of the rivals Michael Jordan had to conquer on his way to his first run of three straight NBA titles. And Rodman then became one of the teammates who helped Jordan pull off his second three-peat.

B.J. Armstrong saw both sides.

Armstrong was there in the beginning, when Jordan and the Chicago Bulls needed time to figure out how to eventually beat Rodman and the Detroit Pistons for Eastern Conference supremacy and a trip to the NBA Finals in 1991 that started the title run. And Armstrong was on the other side in 1997-98, playing for a Charlotte team that lost to Jordan, Rodman and the Bulls in the East semifinals that season.

For as good as the likes of Jordan and Scottie Pippen were, Armstrong—the long-time NBA guard and three-time NBA champion with the Bulls who is now a California-based sports agent—cautions against underestimating Rodman's role on those Chicago title teams in 1996, 1997 and 1998.

"The thing I always admired about Dennis was he was a very, very intelligent player, and after all of the hair colors and semantics and all those things, underneath that was a really, really good basketball player, very fundamentally sound," Armstrong told The Associated Press. "And I would argue that it would have been very difficult for the Bulls to win without him, because it's hard to win when you don't have bigs who can play with the physicality that's necessary to win at a championship level. And Dennis could meet the challenge."



Rodman's colorful tenure with the Bulls was one of the primary story lines covered Sunday night when the third and fourth episodes of the ESPN and Netflix documentary "The Last Dance"—a 10-part series built around Jordan's final season with the Bulls in 1997-98—aired for the first time. Among the Rodman stories covered Sunday night: His "vacation" to Las Vegas, one that went longer than the 48 hours that the Bulls were willing to al-

low him for a break.

"Dennis always brought energy and always brought effort," Armstrong said. "And the way he did it, it was contagious."

The Pistons famously had "The Jordan Rules" when they were atop the NBA and holding off the up-and-coming Bulls during Detroit's title runs in 1989 and 1990.

Armstrong said in 1998, Charlotte had its version of special rules as well—not for Jordan, but for Rodman.

"I mean, the guy just understood how to rebound," Armstrong said. "We had an assistant coach on our staff at the time, Paul Silas. And Paul used to always tell us that what Dennis is doing, you can't prepare for. He was that good. You couldn't box him out. You had to face-guard him. The reason he was a great rebounder was he understood offensive schemes and he understood the timing of the shots."

The Rodman rules didn't work: He averaged 17.6 rebounds, by far the best in the series, and Chicago ousted Charlotte in five games.

"All the other things that went on around him, that was just Dennis," Armstrong said. "But make no doubt about it—when he was between the lines, he was an excellent, excellent basketball player."

Two new episodes of the documentary will air each Sunday night through May 17.

AP
In this June 10, 1998, file photo, Chicago Bulls' Dennis Rodman, left, protects the ball after grabbing the rebound, while Michael Jordan looks on during the second half of their match against the Utah Jazz in Game 4 in the NBA Finals in Chicago.

Kerr-Jordan fight

During his time playing with the Chicago Bulls, Warriors coach Steve Kerr was punched by teammate Michael Jordan during training camp prior to the 1995-96 season.

But instead of pushing them apart, Kerr believes it actually made them closer on the court.

"I feel like I passed the test and he trusted me more afterwards. I would say it definitely helped our relationship, and that probably sounds really weird," Kerr said. "I wouldn't recommend that to anybody at home. ... For me in that case, Michael was definitely testing me, and I responded. I feel like I kind of passed the test and he trusted me more afterwards."

The two reconciled and both were part of the infamous 1997-1998 Bulls team now being chronicled in ESPN's "The Last Dance."

Kerr came to Chicago in 1993, but wasn't Jordan's teammate until his return from a brief stint playing professional baseball.

As the coach said back in 2013, he got a few blows in during the altercation, but came away with a black eye.

"I knew that if we were in an actual fight he could actually probably kill me if he wanted to," Kerr told ESPN. "It was more just I'm going to stand up for myself."

Nothing like a good fistfight to bring a team together.

SPAIN (AP)—Rafa Nadal has said he is very pessimistic about the possibility of tennis returning to normal any time soon because of the new coronavirus pandemic that shut down the sport last month.

Professional tennis has been suspended until the end of July, at the earliest, and the Spaniard said on Sunday that serious problems stand in the way of a resumption.

"From my point of view, I'm very pessimistic that the circuit can resume normal activity," the world number two said in an online chat organized by the Spanish Tennis Federation.

"In tennis, you need to travel every week, stay in hotels, go to different countries.

"Even if we play without an audience, to organize any event you need a lot of people involved, which cannot be ignored. At an international

Nadal pessimistic over return to normal for tennis

level I see a serious problem."

The coronavirus outbreak has decimated the world sports calendar, forcing the postponement of the Olympic Games, which includes tennis, and the cancellation of Wimbledon.

"We have already said many times we are in a very difficult moment, for everyone," Nadal said. "Step-by-step it looks like things are slightly less bad, but we've been through one and a half very tough months, lots of irreparable losses and other losses that are less important, but without doubt will cause suffering in society in the following months."

"I hope it will be months not years because it's also an economic issue as well. Lots of people are going to lose their jobs. These are sad moments when you see so many people

dying," he added.

Nadal, 33, said that even when tennis does resume the players will need to recover their fitness levels.

"It will be a very tough job to regain fitness and you will need lots of discipline and lots of suffering," he said. "The sooner we can resume activity the better. From the point of view about going back to competitions, I'm pessimistic. But there are many other things more important than tennis."

Spain has been especially badly hit by the virus with 223,759 infections and 23,190 deaths.

Nadal is due to play in a 'virtual' Madrid Open starting on Monday with 32 of the world's best players swapping rackets for gaming controls in

a computerized version of the tournament.

Meanwhile, the organizers of the French Open, who were criticized for unilaterally moving the tournament to a September start without consulting other tennis federations, could delay the event by another week, a report said Friday.

The claycourt Grand Slam could now start on September 27 instead of September 20, preceded by a week of qualification matches, Le Parisien newspaper said.

The French Tennis Federation (FFT) declined to confirm the report, but said in a statement: "The FFT is in contact with the international bodies, the ATP, WTA and ITF, and is waiting for the calendar to be confirmed by them."

No handouts from Thiem

World No. 3 Dominic Thiem has rejected the notion that the top tennis players should chip in to help lower-ranked competitors who are struggling financially due to the pause in tournaments because of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

World No. 1 Novak Djokovic last week urged players to contribute to a fund set up by the sport's major governing bodies to help players affected by a shutdown which began in March and will continue at least until mid-July.

But Austrian Thiem said he felt there were sections of society that needed more urgent help during the economic crisis caused by the pandemic than his fellow competitors.

"No tennis player is fight-

ing to survive, even those who are much lower-ranked. None of them are going to starve," Thiem told Austrian newspaper Krone on Sunday.

Thiem, 26, who has reached three finals at grand slams since 2018, losing each time, criticized the attitude of some players on the lower-tier Futures circuit, which he said meant they did not deserve handouts from the sport's top players.

"There are many, many players who don't put the sport above everything else and don't live in a professional manner. I don't really see why I should give such players money. I'd rather give money to people or organizations that really need it," he added.

"None of us top players got anything handed to us, we all had to fight our way up. I don't have the guarantee in any job that I will do well and earn lots of money."



49ers fill needs, Packers fall short in draft



NEW YORK (AP) — The task for the San Francisco 49ers heading into the draft was straight forward.

Find replacements for departed starters DeForest Buckner at defensive tackle and Emmanuel Sanders at receiver and then find a player to step in for longtime left tackle Joe Staley, who informed the NFC champions before the draft that he planned to retire.

The Niners filled the first two spots in the first round with defensive tackle Jevon Kinlaw and receiver Brandon Aiyuk and hoped they wouldn't regret passing on a potential starting tackle like Tristan Wirfs.

They couldn't have scripted it any better when they were able to trade for seven-time Pro Bowl left tackle Trent Williams on Saturday.

"It was a good gamble that worked out well," coach Kyle Shanahan said.

While the 49ers were one of the teams that filled their needs on draft weekend. Others like Green Bay fell short.

The Packers got a first-round quarterback in Jordan Love to sit behind Aaron Rodgers for a couple of years but didn't get their star quarterback any wideouts in a receiver-rich draft.

"It's a little bit the way everything kind of fell early in the draft," Packers GM Brian Gutekunst said. "It just didn't work out that we were able to select some of the guys we had rated really highly."

Here's a look at how some other teams filled their needs or didn't on draft weekend:

VIKINGS

Minnesota's needs were clear after trading star receiver Stefon Diggs and losing corner-



AP Ohio State quarterback Jordan Love will sit behind Aaron Rodgers after getting selected by the Green Bay Packers during last weekend's NFL virtual draft.

ing trio. Elway also added fleet tight end Albert Okwuegunam on day three. Lock gets some protection with two strong interior blockers in LSU center Lloyd Cushenberry and Fresno State guard Netane Muti.

BUCCANEERS

The Bucs are in win-now mode after signing Tom Brady and acquiring Rob Gronkowski. They did a good job of filling their roster with players who can help their soon-to-be 43-year-old quarterback. They got one of the top tackles in round one in Wirfs and a talented slot receiver in fifth-rounder Tyler Johnson. They also added a third-round running back in Ke'Shawn Vaughn to team with Ronald Jones and a ball-hawking safety in Antoine Winfield.

PANTHERS

After signing quarterback Teddy Bridgewater and receiver Robby Anderson in free agency and locking up running back Christian McCaffrey with a long-term extension, new coach Matt Rhule set out to replace nine defensive starters in the draft. Carolina became the first team in the common draft era to use all of their draft picks on defensive players. Stud defensive tackle Derrick Brown highlights the seven-player class that also includes edge rusher Yetur Gross-Matos, and defensive backs Jeremy Chinn, Troy Pride Jr., and former West Virginia and XFL safety Keny Robinson.

PATRIOTS

New England couldn't expect

to find Tom Brady's replacement in the draft but didn't even take a shot on any of the quarterbacks. They also failed to bolster their weak receiver group, instead adding to their stellar defense with the first three picks before taking two tight ends in round three.

RAMS

The Rams had one of the league's worst offensive lines last year and didn't address that spot until taking Clemson tackle Treyman Anchrum in the seventh round. They had no first-round pick after trading it for cornerback Jalen Ramsey and used their first selection on running back Cam Akers. This is the second straight year they took a running back on day two, which isn't always the best value.

CHARGERS

Los Angeles' other team also had problems on the offensive line last year that weren't addressed in the draft. They took QB Justin Herbert sixth overall and traded back into the first round for LB Kenneth Murray. That left them with no more picks until round four and they didn't end up with any linemen.

DOLPHINS

This draft will be a success for Miami if QB Tua Tagovailoa remains healthy and develops into a franchise QB. But it wouldn't have hurt to get him a starting receiver in a draft filled with prospects. Instead, they spent their next six picks on the offensive line and secondary and didn't take a receiver until grabbing Navy QB Malcom Perry in the seventh round. That leaves them with DeVante Parker and few other proven options at receiver.

backs Xavier Rhodes, Trae Waynes and Mackensie Alexander. They managed to fill them despite trading down a couple of times in the draft and ended up taking 15 players and acquiring two mid-round picks in 2021. The highlights of this class are first-round receiver Justin Jefferson and cornerback Jeff Gladney. They

added another promising cornerback in Cameron Dantzler in the third round, a good coverage linebacker in fourth-rounder Troy Dye. Second-round offensive tackle Ezra Cleveland also provides good value and could be a starter by 2021.

BRONCOS

Quarterback Drew Lock

showed promise in a five-game audition at the end of his rookie season in 2019. Denver GM John Elway gave Lock plenty of help. The draft's best route runner in Jerry Jeudy fell to the Broncos at No. 15 in the first round and they added Penn State speedster KJ Hamler to team with Courtland Sutton for a powerful receiv-

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—The Saints and quarterback Jameis Winston are working on a contract proposal to make the former Buccaneers starter a backup to Drew Brees in New Orleans, a person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press.

Winston and the Saints are in "advanced" talks, the person said, speaking to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Sunday because negotiations were ongoing. The person declined to say whether there was any agreement on either the length of the contract or financial terms.

Yahoo Sports first reported the Saints' interest in signing Winston as a backup.

Meanwhile, the Saints have announced that dynamic reserve QB and utility player

Saints, Winston in 'advanced' negotiations

Taysom Hill has a new two-year contract.

Winston is coming off a season in which he led the NFL with 5,109 yards passing and ranked second with 33 touchdown passes, but he also led the NFL in interceptions with 30. That made Winston the first QB in NFL history to have at least 30 TDs and 30 interceptions. Tampa Bay allowed Winston, whom it drafted first overall out of Florida State in 2015, to enter free agency and replaced him with former Patriots QB Tom Brady.

Now it appears Winston is open to going from five-year NFL starter to being Brees' understudy in hopes of rebuilding his credentials as a

prospective franchise quarterback. Teddy Bridgewater recently did just that, serving as Brees' backup for two seasons before the Carolina Panthers signed him last month to replace their longtime starter, Cam Newton.

Winston was a two-year starter at Florida State, where he won the Heisman Trophy and led the Seminoles to a national title as a freshman in the 2013 season.

In five seasons with the Buccaneers, he has passed for 19,737 yards and 121 touchdowns while throwing 88 interceptions. But while he was productive statistically, that didn't amount to winning. The Bucs went 28-42 in

games Winston started.

Draft averages record 8.4M viewers

Seth Markman was just as nervous as NFL coaches and general managers about the unknown factors involved with a virtual draft. But the ESPN executive producer said he was overwhelmed with how everything came together over the three days.

It also ended up being must-see TV as the first significant live sporting event since the coronavirus pandemic ground everything to a halt. The draft averaged a record 8.4 million viewers over all three days, according to the NFL and Nielsen. The previous high

was 6.2 million last year.

"I thought a coach or general manager might put a towel on the camera or point it another direction, but there were zero issues," Markman said. "There were a couple times that we lost a feed or two, but it quickly came back."

After early concerns about how the NFL could conduct a virtual draft, everyone appeared to end up having fun with it. Coaches and general managers embraced their children or spouses being on camera and draft picks got to watch from home comfortably instead of waiting in a green room.

Even normally stodgy New England coach Bill Belichick

got into the spirit of things by giving his dog, an Alaskan Klee Kai named Nike, some television time.

"I thought coaches and general managers were going to lock themselves in a room and it was the opposite. Every time I looked up there was more family around," Markman said.

Each day attracted record audiences. Thursday's first round averaged 15.6 million, Friday's second and third rounds 8.2 million and Saturday's final four rounds 4.2 million. ESPN and NFL Network had a combined production all three days while ABC had separate telecasts Thursday and Friday before simulcasting the ESPN/NFL Network feed Saturday. ESPN Deportes also had a separate broadcast.

A's offered Jordan major league contract



**O A K -
L A N D** —

Michael Jordan has loved baseball since childhood.

Most famously, he retired from the Bulls in 1993 to play professional baseball. In 1994, he joined the Birmingham Barons—the Double-A affiliate of the Chicago White Sox, who were owned by Bulls owner Jerry Reinsdorf.

“When I heard that was happening, or about to happen, I called his agent right away and said, ‘Hey look, I understand he may be going to Double-A. I don’t even know who the 25th man is on our major league team right now, I will sign him and put him on the major league roster. He’ll be part of our 25-man team. Tomorrow,’” then Oakland Athletics general manager Sandy Alderson said.

“It wasn’t about, ‘We’ve got a spot for him, he’s got a particular skill,’” Alderson told Olney. “That wasn’t the idea. The idea was, ‘We’ve got Michael Jordan on our team’ and the interest that would have generated.”

Jordan’s agent, David Falk, confirmed the offer.

“I was excited about [the offer], and Michael was very appreciative,” Falk said. “But

he wanted to do the baseball thing from the ground up. He didn’t feel he deserved a spot on the Major League roster and didn’t feel he was ready. He didn’t want to be a Herb Washington type who would just steal bases and be a part-time outfielder.”

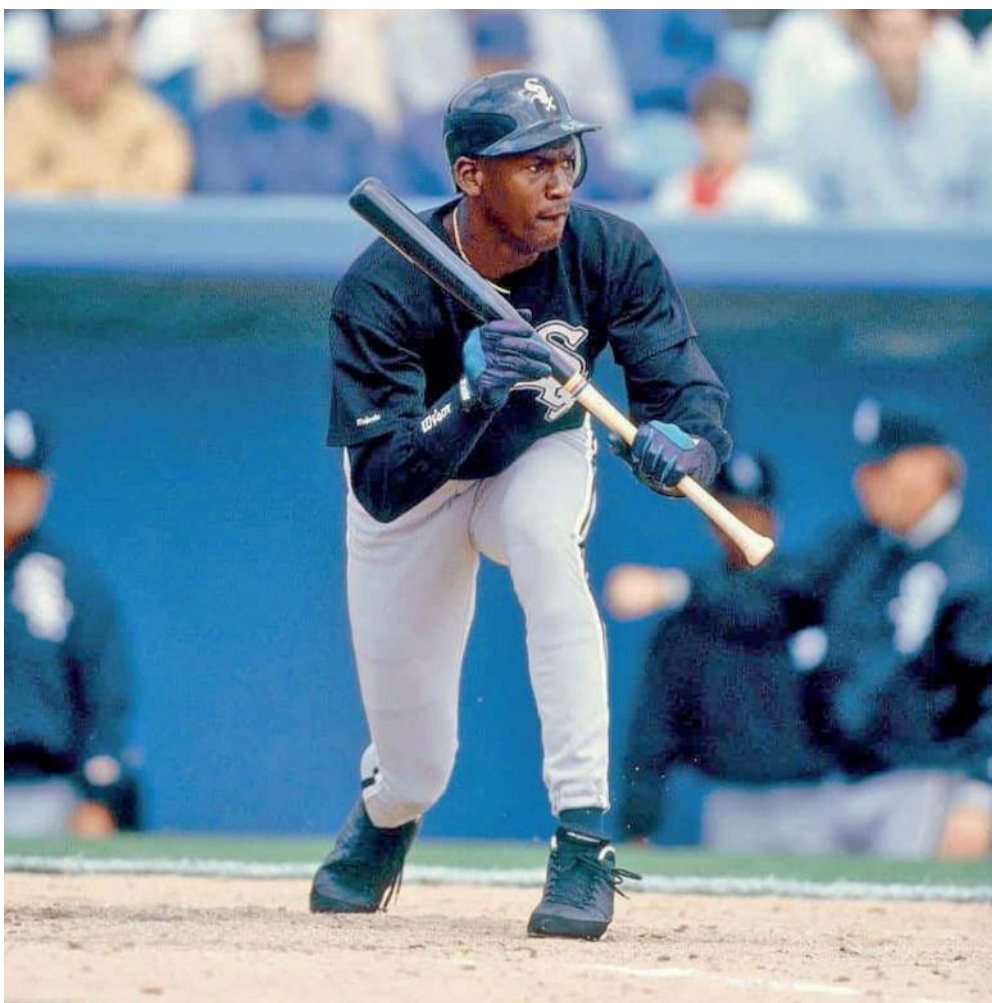
“Michael’s an amazingly loyal guy,” Falk said. “If not for his relationship with the White Sox, [the A’s offer] might have been something he might have done.”

Considering how long it’d been since he played baseball, Jordan was actually relatively good for Birmingham. Maybe—probably not, but maybe—he actually could have worked himself into a legitimate major-league player. Or at least more legitimate.

Instead, Jordan returned to the Bulls and continued a dynasty.

Who knows how that would have gone if Jordan began his baseball career in the majors? Maybe he would’ve played longer. Maybe, with even more attention on him, he would have burned out on professional sports entirely. It’s hard to imagine a scenario where he would’ve spent more time with the Bulls—only less or the same amount.

Also, what a brutal line from Alderson: “I don’t even know



AP
In this undated file photo, Michael Jordan bunts in one of his games with the Chicago White Sox AA minor league team, the Birmingham Barons.

es or managers are known to have contracted the virus as of late Wednesday, Dorey said, crediting the Cubs’ medical staff and an aggressive, early approach with preventative measures.

The Cubs said late in the week the big-league side of the operation also has experienced no known cases.

The roster of minor leaguers includes two Italian prospects who stayed behind in their home country as a precaution even as spring training began. In fact, pitching prospect Matteo Bocchi, who lives in the hard-hit area of Parma, continues to keep his arm in shape by throwing into a quilt hung between trees at home and lifts weights fashioned from cinder blocks by his dad.

Whether he or any other prospects have a season to play is in greater doubt than the big-league season.

“This is all uncharted,” said Dorey, who avoids speculation while working with the rest of the staff to try to be ready for any contingency. “Once we have a better idea what the major league season will look like, then we can work backwards from there.”

As for the bad-news, good-news part of the scenario, MLB and the players union agreed last month to a delayed and shortened draft that could be moved from June into July and shortened from 40 rounds to as few as five or 10.

With no amateur leagues to scout and individual try-outs banned, that could at first glance serve as an equalizer for teams competing for impact depth in the draft, and a greater disappointment for teams that pour more resources into that part of their operation or otherwise feel a greater stake in acquiring young depth right now.

who the 25th man is on our major league team right now.” That’s worse than what Jordan used to tell Scott Burrell.

Cubs draft plan

Meanwhile, Stat geeks and

seam heads can model make-believe seasons and debate from here until stay-at-home orders are lifted whether the ramifications of the coronavirus shutdown will help or hurt the Cubs—or any other team—if an abbreviated season is played this year.

After an offseason that added little to the Cubs’ big-league roster following last season’s playoff miss, it already was doubtful just how much was worth debating even before the 2020 season was put on hold.

But the Bears aren’t the only team on the clock when it comes to a draft that figures to matter in Chicago sports this year.

While the Cubs didn’t do much to their major-league team over the winter, they made dramatic changes to a scouting and player development structure that has underperformed for eight years under the current regime.

A restructuring that included moving senior executive

Jason McLeod to major-league operations and hiring former Cardinals scouting director Dan Kantrovitz as head of amateur scouting made this year’s draft an especially big part of the Cubs’ 2020 calendar—its place on that calendar and its length now uncertain because of the shutdown.

“My heart goes out to those guys,” said Matt Dorey, who was promoted from amateur scouting director to senior director for player development as part of the reshuffling. “They put so much work and time in attacking the draft, and we’re really well positioned.”

For the area of the Cubs organization that underwent the most change since last season, the coronavirus shutdown has produced a kind of bad-news, good-news, best-news scenario four weeks into the delayed season.

The best: None of the roughly 200 players in the system and none of the coach-

SLLB

From Page 20

for the district meet, which is held either late May or early June to determine the islands’ representatives to the Asia Pacific-Middle East Regional Tournament. From the regionals, winning teams will be heading to the World Series, which is still set for late July to August, according to Little League CEO Stephen Keener

in a report posted at the Little League website.

With the World Series-qualifying tournaments still uncertain, as most of the leagues have yet to conclude or even start their competition, Keener floated the idea of an outright selection of teams, soon.

“If we were going to play the World Series, traditionally like we have done for many, many years, we need to be playing and picking teams by

the middle of June,” Kenner was quoted as saying by the Associated Press.

The Little League also turned down the idea of playing games without spectators as the program is built around volunteered parents and other people who usually accompany the young players to the matches.

As for moving the leagues to fall, Little League is expecting conflicts with the players’ schedule in their respective schools.



ROSELYN B. MONROY

In this file photo, a Talaabwogh Falcons player attempts to tag out the Kagman Little Legals’ Jared Muna during their game in the Majors division of the 2019 Saipan Little League Baseball at the Capitol Hill Ballfield.

MINI

From Page 20

Originally, the Mini Games, which the CNMI will be hosting for the first time, was scheduled to take place in June next year. However, COVID-19 struck, forcing this year’s Tokyo Olympics Game to be moved to July 23 to Aug. 8, 2021. The PGC then requested the Commonwealth to push back the Mini Games, as majority of the PGC-member countries will also be competing in the Olympics.

Moving the Mini Games to 2022 would not only avoid clash with the Tokyo Olympics but would also give the CNMI more time to work on the improvement of its facilities. Grants have been made available to fix the sports facilities on island, particularly the Oleai Sports Complex, but COVID-19 came and halted the planned repair work.

Meanwhile, the proposed new dates have to be approved by the council and the participating nations when they hold a general assembly later this

year. Sports to be contested will also have to be decided by the group. Currently, the CNMI is offering six sports—athletics, baseball, badminton, golf, triathlon, and beach volleyball. However, the host country is hoping to add tennis and weightlifting to the calendar of events for the 2022 Mini Games.

Incidentally, the 10th Micronesia Games will also take place 2022 and based on the initial proposal by hosts Marshall Islands, the competition will run from July 10 to Aug. 6.



Rodman
plays big role
in Bulls titles

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Saipan Tribune Sports

49ers fill
needs,
Packers fall
short in draft

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this May 2019 file photo, Achilles Evangelista pitches for the Falcons during the bottom of the third inning of their Majors division game against the Braves in the Saipan Little League Baseball at the Capitol Hill Ballfield.

SLLB on wait and see mode

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Though the Saipan Little League Baseball hasn't given up on its 2020 season, the organization is still uncertain on the opening date of the competition.

SLLB president Mike Borja said they are following orders from Little League International Board of Directors in Williamsport and could not make any backup plans or timetable at this moment. The Little League has advised its members worldwide to suspend games and activities until May 11 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

received a letter from Little League about the suspension of games until April 6. Another advisory released early this month extended the postponement of Little League activities to May 11.

"We are not canceling the season yet as it will all depend on the directive of the Little League headquarters and on the development on this pandemic. For now, SLLB's priority is the safety of our kids and our community," Borja said.

SLLB was originally slated to kick off the 2019 season in February, but had to reschedule the opening to allow teams to meet the requirements set by the Little League headquarters. The opening was then moved to March 14, but a few days before the competition started, SLLB



Had there been no series of suspensions, Little League programs across 84 countries should have been in the final stage of their local competitions. In the CNMI's case, this month should have been the playoff stage for the SLLB, as the Commonwealth will have to get ready

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Mini Games moved to 2022



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Janelle Pangilinan competes in the badminton event of last year's Pacific Games in Samoa. Badminton is one of the six events initially approved for the Pacific Mini Games.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI Pacific Mini Games Oversight Committee has proposed to move the quadrennial competition to 2022.

The suggestion is in response to the Pacific Games Council's request to the CNMI to consider making changes with the dates for the 2021 Pacific Mini Games to avoid

conflict with the Tokyo Olympic Games next year.

"We have reported to the council that the CNMI Pacific Mini Games Oversight Committee has agreed to move our



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Robbie Schorr, left, hits the ball while Colin Sinclair looks on during one of their matches in last year's Pacific Games in Samoa. The CNMI is hoping to add tennis to the list of events for the Pacific Mini Games, which is proposed to be moved to 2022.

games to Summer 2022 due to the rescheduled Olympic Games in 2021," committee chair Alex Sablan said.

He added that they are planning to meet with the CNMI Public School System and other

involved government agencies to discuss the 2022 Mini Games once it's safe to do so and the Commonwealth has successfully battled the pandemic.




Sablan also said that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and the members of the committee are all aware and supportive of the changes in the dates of the

Mini Games, but the greater priority now is to deal with the coronavirus crisis and look after the safety and welfare of CNMI residents.

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THIRD RUN

<div>20</div> <div>SPORTS 12000</div>	<div>1</div> <div>  <div>COVER</div> </div>
<div>2</div> <div>5900</div> <div>TRIBUNE IN-HOUSE AD CMYK</div>	<div>19</div> <div>SPORTS 13800</div>
<div>18</div> <div>SPORTS 13800</div>	<div>3</div> <div>10400</div> <div>NMHC NOTICE</div>
<div>4</div> <div>JUMP FROM PAGE 1 13800</div>	<div>17</div> <div>SPORTS 13800</div>

SECOND RUN

<div>16</div> <div>PASTIMES</div>	<div>5</div> <div>9400</div> <div>RFP20CHC FACIL002</div> <div>CUC AGENDA</div> <div>CPA NOTICE</div>
<div>6</div> <div>9200</div> <div>FLASHBACK</div>	<div>15</div> <div>9200</div> <div>DEAR ABBY</div>
<div>14</div> <div>13800</div>	<div>7</div> <div>13800</div>
<div>8</div> <div>STAFF BOX</div> <div>EDITORIAL CARTOON</div> <div>3000</div> <div>OPINION 5000</div>	<div>13</div> <div>13800</div>

FIRST RUN

<div>12</div> <div>13800</div>	<div>9</div> <div>EDITORIAL POLICY</div> <div>OPINION 11000</div>
<div>10</div> <div>WEATHER FORECAST</div> <div>AIRLINE SCHEDULE</div>	<div>11</div> <div>13800</div>